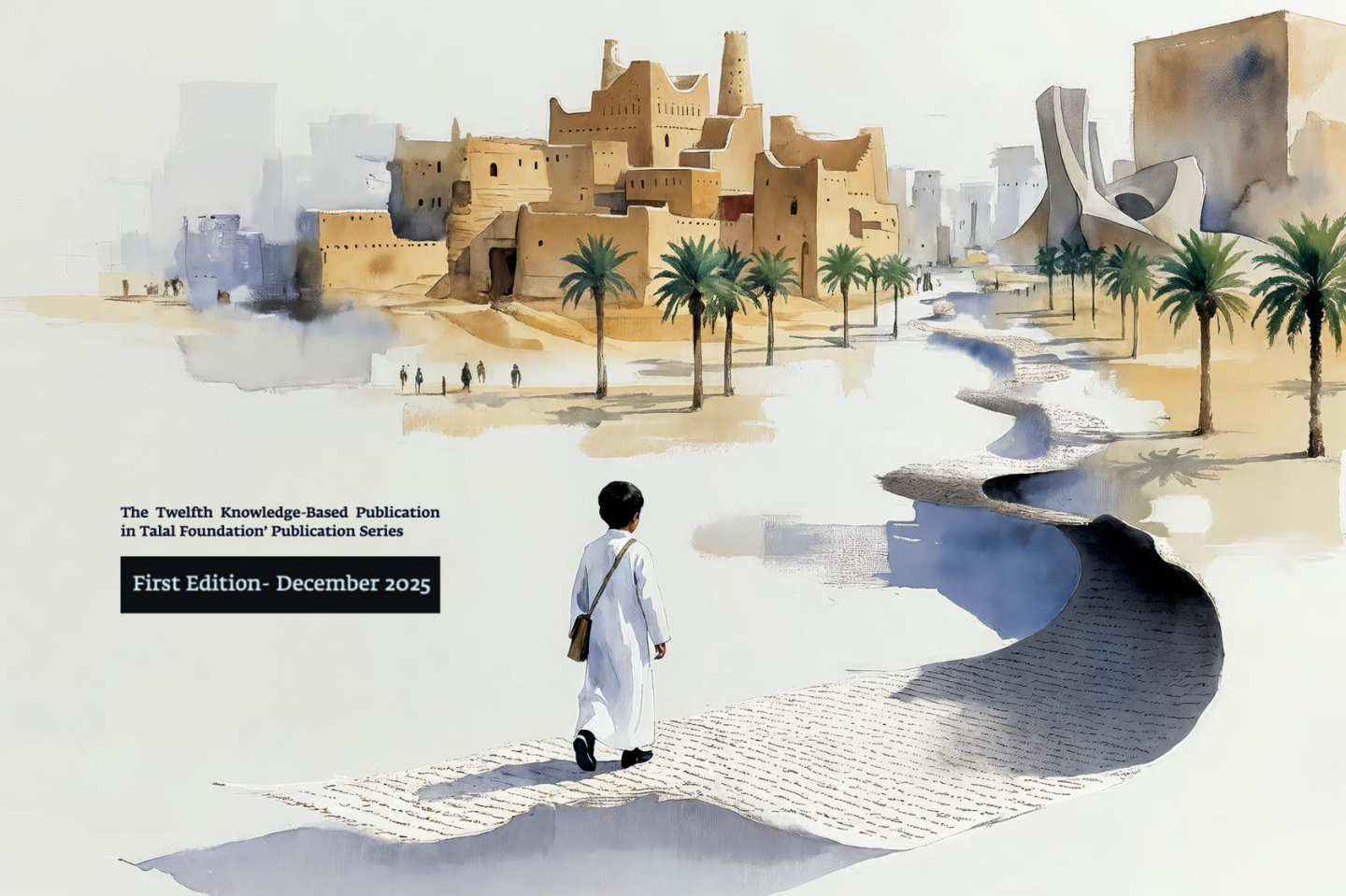
طلال الخيرية
TALAL FOUNDATION
الاستثمـــار في الانســـان

Executive Summary of the Report on the State of the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia



The Twelfth Knowledge-Based Publication in Talal Foundation' Publication Series

First Edition- December 2025



The Twelfth Publication in the Talal Foundation Knowledge Series



“We are confident in the capabilities of Saudi citizens and, after Allah, place great hopes in them to build their nation and feel a deep sense of responsibility toward it.” 1

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

1- Achievements Report of the Human Capability Development Program – 2023



"Our foremost wealth -one that no other wealth, however great, can equal- is an ambitious people, the majority of whom are young. They are the pride of our nation and the guarantee of its future by the grace of Allah. We should not forget that it was through the efforts of its sons and daughters that this country was built under extremely challenging circumstances." . 2

HRH

Crown Prince

Mohammed bin Salman bin

Abdulaziz Al Saud

2- Saudi Vision 2030 – Leadership's Statement



“Caring for children is a fundamental gateway to every effort dedicated toward real human development.”

HRH

Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

The Report on the State of Childhood in Saudi Arabia: A Contribution of Knowledge Serving the Saudi Community



Since its establishment, Prince Talal Bin Abdulaziz Charitable Foundation has placed the care and empowerment of the childhood sector at the heart of its humanitarian mission and within its strategic objectives, based on the belief that "childhood" is the stage in which the first features of the human being are formed, values take root, and skills and knowledge are refined.

His Royal Highness Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz firmly believed that investing in childhood care -health, education, and social well-being- is the most profound and impactful investment in the future of societies. He also believed that building an integrated ecosystem of health, education, protection, and welfare for the childhood sector constitutes the foundation of the desired renaissance at the local, regional, and international levels.

In recent years, the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia has witnessed significant developments, including the modernization of systems and policies, as well as the development of programs and services. The outcomes of this progress have been reflected in Saudi Arabia's improved ranking on global indicators related to childhood care. Amid these developments, Talal Foundation felt its responsibility to document the current reality, analyze the achievements, and identify areas that need strengthening, believing that knowledge of the situation is the first step towards supporting national efforts in the child care sector.

From this perspective, the Foundation launched the initiative to prepare the "Report on the State of Childhood in Saudi Arabia 2023–2024" as a national reference that monitors progress, identifies gaps, strengthens integration, and contributes to guiding resources and policies in ways that serve children and safeguard their rights.

The report was prepared using a comprehensive methodology encompassing data, indicators, and national efforts. It has been aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and informed by a selection of relevant international and regional reports on child care. It was developed under the supervision of a committee of experts in regulations, scientific research, and indicator development. Partnership was built with a strategic knowledge partner that has extensive experience in issuing rigorous scientific studies.

I cannot fail to express my appreciation to all the government and charitable organizations that collaborated with Talal Foundation over the course of one year. I would also like to thank the advisory committees involved in the various stages of the project, the executive management of Talal Foundation, and our knowledge partner, Laden Company.

At Talal Foundation, we believe that developing the childhood care sector is a shared responsibility, and building a prosperous future for our Saudi society begins by providing every child with a safe environment, quality education, and fair opportunities for growth and participation. We hope that this report fulfills its purpose in supporting decision-makers, empowering partners, and strengthening efforts toward a healthier, more dignified, and more prosperous Saudi childhood sector.

Her Royal Highness
Princess
Nouf bint Khalid bin Talal bin Abdulaziz

Secretary General
Talal Foundation

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The team preparing the Report on the State of Childhood in Saudi Arabia extends its sincere appreciation to all entities, experts and specialists who contributed their time, knowledge and expertise to enrich the report and support its scientific and methodological foundations.

The team also appreciates the cooperation that enabled the integration of efforts and the alignment of visions, which results in a comprehensive and accurate reading of the state of the childhood sector, reflecting its various dimensions and serving the report's objectives.

Special thanks are extended to the Expert Committee that supervised the report for their scientific oversight, professional guidance, and specialized reviews that contributed significantly to enhancing the quality of the outputs. The Expert Committee included:

- Chairman: Dr. Mastoura Al-Shammari.
- Member: Dr. Mansour Al-Hajlah
- Member: Dr. Nahla Qahwaji.
- Rapporteur: Dr. Salman Al-Anqari.

This collective effort reflected a strong spirit of collaboration and shared commitment among institutions, experts, and professionals working within the childhood ecosystem, as well as their dedication to contributing in ways that enhance the quality of the report. This report is the outcome of this cooperation, which embodies a joint responsibility towards the childhood sector issues and their future.

The Executive Management of Talal Foundation

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Introduction

Introduction

This executive summary provides decision-makers and relevant stakeholders with a focused overview of key childhood issues, indicators and developments in Saudi Arabia during 2023–2024. It draws on the latest available national data up to mid-2024 and relevant international and national reference frameworks.

The report provides an in-depth and integrated analytical review of the main report's findings, presenting the key indicators through the six childhood sector dimensions in a structured manner. It highlights the overarching trends, major national efforts, and gaps that affect the service quality and equitable access. The report thereby offers a deeper understanding beyond the numbers, and links them to the broader institutional and policy context.

The report also shows the progress achieved in several areas of service and regulation, particularly regarding preventive healthcare, digital transformation in education, children's cultural and social participation, and enhancement of regulatory frameworks and national policies related to childhood. In addition, it highlights the emerging new initiatives in environmental awareness and sustainability for children and families.

The report also highlights structural challenges affecting the maturity of the childhood ecosystem, including limited policy integration, fragmented data, challenges in early childhood education and school mental health, and geographic disparities in access to services. These findings are considered in light of selected international benchmarks.

This publication serves as one of the supporting tools for the annual monitoring of childhood issues. It aims to strengthen the policy governance, enhance the institutional integration, and guide the efforts and resources toward clearly defined national priorities, thereby contributing to building a healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous environment for children in Saudi Arabia.



Firstly:
General Framework

1: General Framework

The report is grounded in a vision that considers childhood a fundamental pillar of sustainable development. It focuses on documenting the national efforts through detailed indicators of the dimensions addressed in the report. In addition, it analyzes areas of strength, identifies gaps, and proposes practical development pathways aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the national initiatives concerned with quality of life and children's rights.

As for the analytical design, the report adopts an integrated knowledge framework that combines international and national references to accurately understand the state of childhood. It draws on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030, and other relevant national strategies. The report also includes a review of the existing laws and policies, and an evaluation of the level of their implementation.

Furthermore, the report benefits from local and international knowledge production and comparative reports, employing a multidimensional analytical methodology that takes into account demographic, social, and cultural contexts, as well as the roles of various sectors that influence children's lives. This comprehensive structure presents a coherent and interconnected explanation that supports a deeper understanding of the structural and behavioral factors, and also priorities are built.

Overall Objective of the Report

The report aims to provide a systematic and objective analysis of the childhood state in Saudi Arabia between 2023 and 2024, based on the reliable official data. It translates the quantitative indicators into a deeper understanding of the service quality and the achievement of the national and international objectives. This approach contributes to identifying priority gaps, strengthening institutional integration, and activating the tangible impact of policies and programs within the childhood sector.

Drawing on this general objective, the report seeks to present a strategic reading of the state of childhood in Saudi Arabia during 2023–2024 by setting five main objectives:

1- To analyze the state of childhood in Saudi Arabia from 2023 to 2024 according to the global trends and the national vision for children's rights.

2- To document Saudi Arabia's efforts in the childhood sector, and highlight areas of excellence and alignment with the international objectives.

3-To identify and analyze the most significant gaps across all areas that are related to the childhood sector, in order to support the process of decision-making and effective allocation of resources.

4-To provide recommendations aimed at improving the childhood sector and addressing the identified gaps in conformity with Saudi Arabia's aspirations and global standing.

5-To measure and describe the core indicators across the report's dimensions, and compare them with the relevant national objectives and international benchmarks.

The report is guided by a set of key questions, including:

1- What is the state of the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia from 2023 to 2024, within the main priority dimensions and issues, according to the global trends and the national vision of children's rights?

2- How do current efforts, national policies, programs, and legislation contribute to fulfilling children's needs and ensuring their rights both nationally and internationally?

3- What are the most significant developmental gaps in the implementation of the childhood-related policies and programs in Saudi Arabia that need to be addressed?

4-What are the key recommendations and proposed actions regarding the child's well-being in Saudi Arabia, and the enhancement of integration among the concerned entities?



Methodology of Report Design and Tools

The report is designed using a comprehensive methodology that integrates both quantitative and qualitative analysis, while taking into consideration the childhood sector as an interconnected ecosystem that is affected by a wide range of demographic, social, legislative, environmental, and institutional factors. This methodology aims to provide a realistic and comprehensive understanding of the childhood sector reality in Saudi Arabia. An understanding in which the numerical data are linked to their developmental and social implications, and are aligned with the Saudi Vision 2030 and the global standards for children's rights.

The methodology is built upon five core pillars, which can be outlined as follows:

1- Selection of Dimensions and Analysis of the Childhood Ecosystem:

The report identified a set of dimensions that reflect the most significant domains within which children live and interact with their family, social, environmental, and institutional surroundings. These dimensions were selected based on an extensive review of:

- International conventions related to childhood.
- The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- National policies and sectoral strategies.
- Comparative international reporting practices.

This selection provides an integrated perspective of the childhood sector as an interconnected ecosystem, encompassing the national and demographic context; policies and legislation; physical and mental health; education; social and cultural context and well-being; environment and sustainability; protection and justice systems; as well as the contribution of the non-profit sector as a key partner in the comprehensive development and child empowerment.

2- Descriptive and Analytical Methodology Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

The report follows a descriptive-analytical methodology that draws on:

•Official data and indicators issued up to mid-2024
•Analysis of relevant policy documents and executive programs
•Academic studies and national research
•International reports issued by UN and regional bodies
•Consultations from experts in specialized fields of childhood

This methodology aims to provide a comprehensive reading that links the quantitative indicators with the social and institutional contexts influencing them, while maintaining objectivity and accuracy of interpretation.

3- Rationale for the Diversity of Analytical Tools

Given the variation in the data and the diversity of issues across the different dimensions, the report employs various analytical tools to ensure accuracy of understanding and clarity of insights, as outlined below:

a) Dimensions with robust quantitative data

Such as health and education, where the following tools were applied:

•Measurement of quantitative indicators
•Analysis of temporal trends
•International benchmarking comparisons, where necessary

b) Dimensions of a legislative or social nature

Such as protection, justice, policies, and social well-being, where the following tools were used:

•Qualitative analysis of institutional contexts
•Review of laws and regulations
•Analysis of institutional roles and their level of integration

c) Dimensions characterized by overlapping environmental, cultural, and social aspects

Such as environment and sustainability, and cultural context, where the following tools were applied:

•Integration of quantitative and descriptive analysis
•Interpretation of indicators in light of societal behaviors and practices

This diversity of tools enabled the report to provide an integrated interpretation of the observed phenomena and allowed it to move away from narrow, sector-specific approaches.

4- Analysis of Results and Measurement of Progress

The quantitative (numerical) indicators were analyzed using an interpretive approach that considers the national context and links the numerical data with their social and developmental implications, without delving into detailed institutional evaluations. This analysis was aligned with:

•National objectives related to Saudi Vision 2030
•Childhood-related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
•Overarching trends observed during 2023 and 2024

This approach aims to measure actual progress in childhood-related areas, understand the factors influencing outcomes, and identify potential areas for improvement.

5- Formulation of the Executive Summary and Future Recommendations

The report concludes by identifying the key trends that emerged across the various dimensions, outlining developmental gaps, and formulating a set of evidence-based practical recommendations. These recommendations are characterized by the following:

• Implementable and grounded in objective analysis.
• Aimed at enhancing integration among national bodies.
• Support the improvement of the quality of services provided to children.
• Contribute to outlining a roadmap for the future of the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia.
• Consider the geographic diversity and variations among the different age groups.

Adopting this integrated methodology, the report provides a pragmatic and comprehensive reading of the state of childhood in Saudi Arabia, combining both quantitative and qualitative analysis. It also links key indicators with policies and executive programs, thereby contributing to informed decision-making and enhanced child well-being, while strengthening the development of a childhood sector ecosystem that is more equitable, empowering, and sustainable.

To clearly explain this methodology, the following figure illustrates the sequence of stages in the report's design and the analytical tools employed, beginning with data collection, followed by analysis and interpretation processes, and culminating in the derivation of findings.

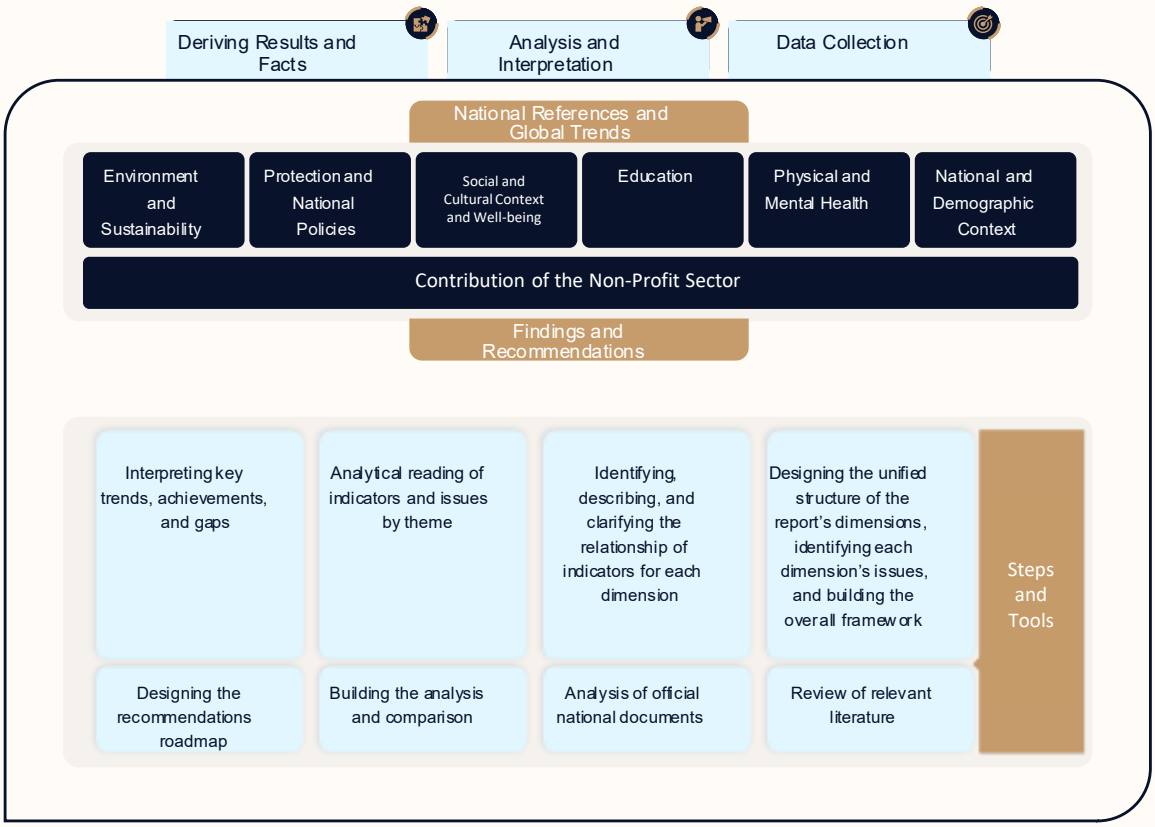


Figure (1) Report Methodology and Tools

The following table provides a summary outlining the rationale behind the selection of the methodology, tools, and procedures used, as well as the scientific and practical justification for each choice.

Methodology of Report Design and Tools		
Justification	Choice / Tool	
This approach relies on direct observation, the examination of experiences, and the review of established and widely recognized facts and phenomena	Empirical Philosophy	Philosophy
To understand the current situation and identify overarching trends through the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data and indicators, accompanied by the interpretation of results.	Descriptive–Analytical	Approach
To ensure the coverage of both policy and implementation aspects, drawing on the efforts of specialists and experts in childhood-related fields.	Literature Review Document Analysis Interpretation of results Formulation of Recommendations	Data Collection Methods
Enables descriptive and interpretive analysis, supports the formulation of implementable recommendations, and facilitates annual monitoring to measure progress.	Linkage & Integration Analysis and Comparison Matrix Recommendation Roadmap	Tools and Procedures

Table 1 : Methodology of Report Design and Tools

Report Scope

The report's scope was defined to cover the most influential dimensions affecting children's lives and development across all Saudi Arabia's regions, while adhering to clear boundaries that regulate the analytical process and ensure the consistency and accuracy of the findings. Within this framework, the following limitations have been established:

1- Thematic limitations :

The report focuses on analyzing the state of the childhood sector across a set of core dimensions, including demographic context, education, physical and mental health, environment and sustainability, social and cultural context and well-being, protection and national policies, and the state of the non-profit sector contribution to the childhood sector. The analysis is limited to assessing the current situation, identifying trends, and highlighting gaps, without evaluating the performance of specific institutions or measuring the implementation impact of programs and initiatives.

2- Geographical limitations :

The report comprehensively covers all thirteen regions of Saudi Arabia, based on the official national data. Where disaggregated data at the regional or sectoral level were available, they were utilized for comparative purposes to analyze regional disparities related to childhood.

3- Temporal limitations :

The report relies on the most recent available data up to mid-2024, with reference to earlier data where updated official data were unavailable. Temporal comparisons (if available) were used to track development in indicators and analyze changes observed in the childhood sector during 2023 and 2024. In some cases, data from earlier years were referenced due to the absence of baseline data for 2023.

4- Institutional limitations :

The report is exclusively grounded in reliable national and international sources, including reports issued by ministries and government entities, national programs and initiatives, specialized academic studies, and the relevant international organization reports. The report does not include the collection of primary field data or conducting independent empirical studies.

5- Methodological limitations :

The report adopts a descriptive and comparative analysis of quantitative indicators and qualitative data, with findings interpreted within both national and international contexts. It does not extend to advanced statistical modeling or causal relationship analysis, in consideration of its role as a strategic reference designed to be periodically updated. The report also develops flexible analytical tools that allow for the future tracking of annual progress in indicators. These limitations are consistent with the report being a national reference that aims at assessing the current situation of the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia, documenting national efforts, identifying gaps, and strengthening integration among the concerned bodies. Collectively, it supports the development of a comprehensive and sustainable childhood ecosystem aligned with Saudi Vision 2030



Terminology

Term	Definition Adopted in the Report	Source / Reference
Childhood	The period from birth to the age of eighteen, during which a person is considered a child under the Child Protection Law (1436H), consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).	Child Protection Law – Experts Authority website, Convention on the Rights of the Child
Child	Any person who has not yet reached the age of eighteen, male or female, and who is entitled to the rights, protection, and care guaranteed by national regulations and international conventions.	Unified Child Protection System – Family Affairs Council website
Demographic Context	Demographic and social characteristics, such as age, gender, income, household size and geographic distribution, that provide a framework for understanding children's circumstances and needs in Saudi Arabia.	General Authority for Statistics; Saudi Vision 2030
Physical Health	The state of complete physical well-being and normal growth of the child, including disease prevention, proper nutrition, and comprehensive healthcare since birth.	Ministry of Health, World Health Organization
Mental Health	The state of psychological and emotional balance that enables the child to interact positively with themselves and their community, cope with daily challenges, and build healthy and stable relationships.	Ministry of Health, World Health Organization
Education	Formal education provided and guaranteed by state institutions, covering all stages from kindergarten through the end of general education. It develops children's knowledge, skills and values in an equitable and safe learning environment.	Ministry of Education, Saudi Vision 2030
Social Context	The family and community environment that influences the child's upbringing and behavior, including immediate and extended family structures and patterns of social interaction that shape the child's daily experiences.	Family Affairs Council, Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development

Term	Definition Adopted in the Report	Source / Reference
Cultural Context	The system of values, customs, and practices that shape the child's cultural identity and influence their awareness and sense of belonging, including national efforts to strengthen children's connection to their local and national culture and heritage.	Ministry of Culture; Saudi Vision 2030
Well-being	The level of the quality of life experienced by a child in terms of health, education, safety, participation, and recreational activities. It is a major indicator of achieving a balanced development.	Quality of Life Program – Saudi Vision 2030
Protection and National Policies	A set of laws and procedures that ensure the protection of children from all forms of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and regulate their rights and obligations within a national framework aligned with the international conventions.	Child Protection Law; Personal Status Law; Protection from Abuse Law
Environment and Sustainability	The natural and built environment in which a child lives, including air and water quality, green spaces, and sustainable housing, as well as ensuring the sustainability of resources for future generations.	Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture; Sustainable Development Goals
Indicators	Quantitative and qualitative tools used to measure changes in the situation of children across areas such as education, health, protection, and well-being. They are also used to monitor progress toward national and international targets.	General Authority for Statistics; Family Affairs Council
Proposed Indicators	Qualitative and quantitative indicators that have not yet been adopted nationally and are recommended for development within future monitoring and evaluation systems, in line with this report's recommendations, to measure progress in childhood-related areas more accurately and comprehensively.	Report Methodology; Report Preparation Team Recommendations
Gaps	Variations or disparities in children-related services, outcomes, or indicators across regions or among different social and economic groups.	Methodology of the Report on the State of Childhood in Saudi Arabia
Recommendations	Evidence-based and analysis-driven proposals aimed at developing policies and programs, improving children's conditions, and ensuring the sustainability of impact.	Report Methodology
Institutional Integration	The principle of cooperation and coordination among government entities, non-profit organizations, and the private sector to unify the efforts and integrate the programs and the policies targeting children, within a shared national framework.	Family Affairs Council – National Childhood Framework
Restorative Justice	A justice-based approach that focuses on repairing the harm caused by a crime through the involvement of the victim, the offender, and the community, thereby strengthening accountability, restoring relationships, and enhancing community safety.	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes, 2nd Edition, 2020

Report Structure

The report is built upon an integrated methodological structure that begins with a presentation of the literature review and reference foundations that form the conceptual framework for understanding the state of childhood. Then, it moves to the core dimensions that constitute the essence of the analysis, including physical and mental health; environment and sustainability; social and cultural context and well-being; protection and national policies; and the state of the non-profit sector's contribution to the childhood sector.

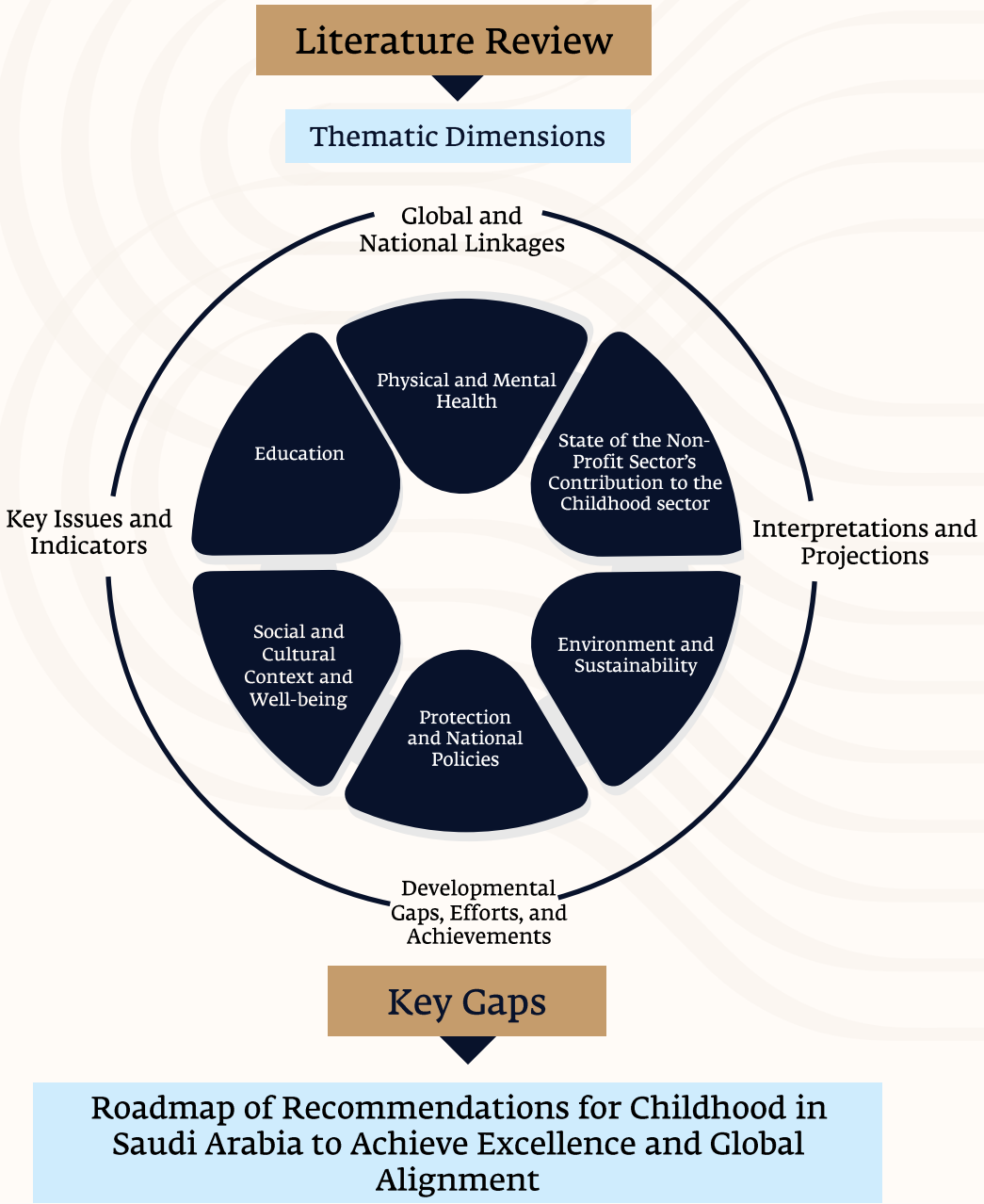
Each dimension is addressed using a unified methodology that starts with a description of the domain and a review of its key issues and indicators reflecting levels of progress and challenges, and proceeds to an analysis of developmental gaps, as well as the efforts and achievements that have shaped the development trajectory in each dimension. This progressive structure helps present a comprehensive and interconnected picture of the state of the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia and contributes to guiding perspectives and policies toward clear priorities that support the child's well-being and enhance the quality of life.

A dedicated chapter is allocated to presenting the most significant developmental gaps across the various dimensions, followed by a concluding section outlining the key recommendations put forward by the report for decision-makers and executive entities. These recommendations aim to develop the childhood ecosystem and strengthen its sustainability, in alignment with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030.



rt Structure Model

The following figure illustrates the overall structure of the report:





Secondly: Literature Review

2: Literature Review

The literature review addresses childhood-related issues across three levels: the general global level, the level of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the level of Saudi Vision 2030.

Global Attention to Childhood

The childhood stage -from birth until the age of eighteen- is considered one of the most critical phases of human life. During which the physical, mental, psychological, and social foundations of the individual are formed and affect the whole life path. As the literature review confirms; approximately 90% of the brain development occurs during the first five years of life, which makes the safe environment, proper nutrition, and early stimulation, crucial determinants of balanced growth. Studies further highlight that any disruption during this stage, such as malnutrition, educational deprivation, or exposure to violence, can have long-term effects on health and academic and economic achievement in the future. International organizations, on top of them the United Nations and UNICEF, have institutionalized global attention to childhood through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and comprehensive programs focused on health and nutrition, early childhood education, protection from violence, equality, as well as ensuring that marginalized groups have access to rights and essential services.

Childhood in light of the Sustainable Development Goals

At the level of the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda of the UN places childhood at the core of human development, given the strong linkage between children's rights and a vast number of global goals. These goals include: Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16). In addition to the environmental goals about Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Life Below Water and Life on Land (SDGs 14–15).

These orientations emphasize ensuring comprehensive healthcare, equitable education, and the protection of children from violence and exploitation, as well as creating child-friendly urban environments. They also underscore the importance of fostering environmental awareness and empowering children to participate in sustainability paths. Accordingly, the sustainable development framework constitutes an interconnected system that brings together children's basic needs with the health, educational, social, and environmental dimensions of development.

The following table summarizes the areas of focus of the Sustainable Development Goals with regard to childhood.

Dimension	Goal Number	Goal	Early Childhood-Related Targets
Physical & Mental Health	Goal 3	Good Health and Well-being Focuses on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, including children, through healthcare services, nutrition, and physical and mental health	○ Reduce maternal mortality rates ○ End child mortality under the age of five ○ Reduce premature mortality caused by non-communicable diseases. ○ Ensure access to reproductive health services and health education. ○ Achieve universal health coverage for all population groups ○ Reduce deaths and illnesses resulting from environmental pollution and exposure to hazardous chemicals ○ Support research and ensure access to affordable medicines and vaccines ○ End all forms of malnutrition among children under five years of age
Education	Goal 4	Ensures inclusive and equitable quality education for all, and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for everyone	○ Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes by 2030. ○ Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for vulnerable groups, including children in vulnerable situations. ○ Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all. ○ Improve the quality of learning and the effectiveness of assessment to enhance skills and learning outcomes. ○ Develop capacities and promote excellence. ○ Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education by 2030. ○ This includes : ○ Expanding the presentation of high-quality early childhood education programs. ○ Integrating culture and citizenship values into curricula from the early childhood stage. ○ Strengthening socialization and early life skills.
Social and Cultural Context and Well-being	Goal 2	Aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	○ End hunger and ensure all people, particularly the poor and those in vulnerable situations, including children, have access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round by 2030 ○ End all forms of malnutrition by 2025, including achieving internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting among children under five, and addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons

Table (2): Sustainable Development Goals related to Childhood

Dimension	Goal Number	Goal	Early Childhood-Related Targets
Protection and National Policies	Goal 16	Promotes peaceful and inclusive societies in which no person is neglected to achieve sustainable development, ensures access to justice for all, and builds effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	• End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children. • Promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all. • Provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.
Environment & Sustainability	Goal 6	Ensures the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.	○ SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation ○ Target 6.1: Ensure universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. ○ Target 6.2: Ensure access to sanitation and hygiene services for all.
	Goal 12	Ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns	○ Promote sustainable consumption patterns through responsible production and consumption.
	Goal 13	Calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.*	○ Climate action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
	Goal 14	Conserves and sustainably uses oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.	• Life below water: Conserve oceans, seas, and marine resources
	Goal 15	Protects, restores, and promotes the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems; sustainably manages forests; combats desertification; halts and reverses land degradation; and halts biodiversity loss.	• Life on land: Protect terrestrial ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss

Table (2): Sustainable Development Goals related to Childhood

Childhood in Light of Saudi Vision 2030

At the level of Saudi Vision 2030, a clear national commitment is evident toward enhancing children's quality of life and toward developing their capabilities through targeted programs in education, health, social well-being, and the environment.

In education, the Human Capability Development Program focuses on building a flexible and inclusive education system that begins in early childhood. This is achieved through expanding kindergarten classes, integrating early primary grades, and increasing enrollment rates to ensure an equitable and stimulating learning environment.

In the health sector, the Health Sector Transformation Program has strengthened immunization systems, preventive care, and physical and mental health support for children, in addition to the national initiatives in the mental health field. Agendas under the Quality of Life Program also include the development of child-friendly urban environments and the expansion of social well-being services.

At the environmental level, initiatives such as the Saudi Green Initiative and the Middle East Green Initiative, along with green city projects, support children's right to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment.

Together, these pillars form an integrated national framework that ensures child protection and empowerment, providing equitable and inclusive opportunities for children's growth.



The following tables reflect Saudi Vision 2030's commitment to the childhood sector through a set of indicators and targets linked to the report's dimensions:

Dimension	National Program	Priority Issues	Relevant National Indicators	National Target	Source
Physical & Mental Health	• Health Sector Transformation • Quality of Life	Survival, Nutrition, and Growth (Child Well-being)	Percentage of children aged 24–59 months who are on track in terms of health and development	90%	United Nations Statistics Division (2022). Sustainable Development Goals Indicators Report 2022, p.56
		Preventive Health and Immunization (Early Detection)	Percentage of newborns who underwent early screening for genetic diseases	100%, in accordance with screening procedures	Saudi Public Health Authority. Annual Report 2023.
		Integrated Care and Access to Services (Children with Disabilities)	Number of children registered in the National Disability Registry	Under activation	General Authority for Statistics (2024). Persons with Disabilities Report 2024.
		Mental Health and Social Support (Mental Disorders)	Percentage of Saudis meeting the criteria for mental health disorders (lifetime diagnosis)	Not quantitatively defined	Saudi National Mental Health Survey (2022).
		School Health (School Health Screening)	Number of students who underwent exploratory screening	Expansion of the initiative across all schools	Ministry of Health. Annual Report 2023.
		Health Protection from Risks (Abuse)	Number of reported cases of child abuse	Targeted for reduction	Human Rights Commission. Annual Report 2023.

Table (3): Linkage of National Targets Related to Children's Physical and Mental Health

Dimension	National Program	Priority Issues	Relevant National Indicators	National Target	Source
Education	**Human Capability Development**	Early Childhood Education	Kindergarten enrollment rate for 2025	40%	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
		School Enrollment	Student enrollment rate (ages 6–14)	Not Defined	Education Indicator in Saudi Arabia – 2022, issued by OECD *(Due to the unavailability of more recent data sources)*
			Student enrollment rate (ages 15–19)	Not Defined	
		School Discipline	Index of discipline in the educational environment	0.35 for 2025	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
		Quality of Education, and Academic Achievement	Student performance at PISA in Reading, Science, and Mathematics (500 points)	500 Points	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
		Education of Priority Groups	Percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in educational institutions	20% for 2025	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
		Partnership with Family and Community	Rate of enhanced family participation in preparing their children's future for the year 2025	80%	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024

Table (4): Linkage of National Targets Related to Children's Education

Dimension	National Program	Priority Issues	Relevant National Indicators	National Target	Source
Social and Cultural Context and Well-being	• Quality of Life ○ Human Capability Development	Pride in the National Identity, and Promotion of Cultural Values	Number of cultural events	1,682 for 2025	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
		Culture, Recreation, and Sports for Children	Number of hobby clubs	2,580 for 2025	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
			Percentage of children and adolescents engaging in physical activity for 60 minutes per day	21% for 2030	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
		Community Participation and Youth Development *(Promoting values of positivity, resilience, and the culture of hard work)*	Average level of students' life satisfaction	8.12% for 2025	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
			Number of volunteers	1 million volunteers by 2030	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
		Social Services and Social Inclusion	Percentage of Population coverage of health services, including peripheral areas	99.5% for 2030	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030

Table (5): Linkage of National Targets Related to Children's Well-being and Quality of Life

The following table outlines the key priority issues in improving the environment and sustainability.

Dimension	Priority Issues in Line with the Objectives and Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
Environment & Sustainability	**Education, Awareness, and Participation**: Promoting environmental culture among children and families through education, interactive initiatives, and conservation campaigns.
	Environment in National Policies: Integrating environmental considerations into education, health, housing, and transport within the framework of Vision 2030 and its executive programs.
	Children's Environments (School and Public Settings): Improving air and water quality, as well as school and community infrastructure, to ensure a safe and healthy environment for children.
	Governance and Readiness: Improving legislative frameworks and national institutions to ensure the protection of children's environmental rights and the sustainability of initiatives.

Table (6): Linkage of National Targets Related to Environment and Sustainability

The following table outlines the key priority issues in improving the protection and national policies.

Dimension	Priority Issues in Line with the Objectives and Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
Protection and National Policies	• Shaping the Legislative Framework for Children's Rights. • Legislation Related to Children's Rights. • Access to Justice. • Restorative Justice. • Digital Protection. • Protection from Violence and Abuse. • Family Protection and Support for Care. • Protection of Orphans and the Most Vulnerable Groups. • Protection from Exploitation. • Responsive and Supportive Services. • Accountability and Oversight.

Table (7): Linkage of National Targets Related to Protection & National Policies

Non-Profit Sector's Contribution to the Childhood sector

The non-profit sector is seen as a pillar of the national development. Saudi Vision 2030 has accorded it significant attention, considering it an active partner in building a vibrant society, strengthening values of solidarity, and expanding community participation. This sector contributes to diversifying funding sources, activating volunteer work, and developing the non-profit organizations to become more capable of meeting community needs. Moreover, the role of the non-profit sector is particularly significant in the childhood sector, where it delivers specialized programs and services that support healthcare and rehabilitation, provide early education opportunities, and contribute to social protection for children, especially the most vulnerable groups, such as orphans and children with disabilities. Furthermore, improvements in the legislative environment, with the application of governance and oversight standards, have enhanced public trust in this sector and opened avenues for broader partnerships with the public and private sectors.

The report addresses this dimension through a set of issues related to the contribution of the non-profit sector to the childhood sector, including:

- Financial support, funding mechanisms, and sustainability that ensure the continuity of programs and services.
- Institutional coordination and representation of childhood-focused associations, to enhance the effectiveness of efforts and align their pathways.
- Executive entities and field initiatives that implement direct programs impacting children's lives.
- Community partnership and open innovation that enable new solutions and broaden opportunities for community participation.
- Contribution to regulatory, policy, and legislative processes that frame the work of non-profit organizations and define their standards.

The report highlights efforts and achievements, examines challenges and gaps, and derives lessons and recommendations to enhance the role of the non-profit sector in achieving Vision 2030 childhood targets and reaching the global levels of child well-being.



Thirdly: Report Dimensions

3: Report Dimensions

This report is grounded in six interconnected core dimensions that together form a comprehensive framework for understanding the childhood situation in Saudi Arabia. These dimensions cover legislative, health, educational, social, environmental, and developmental aspects. Each dimension provides an in-depth reading of a specific sector with the aim of measuring progress, identifying gaps, and exploring opportunities to improve children's quality of life.

These dimensions include:

1. **Physical and Mental Health :**

This dimension examines the status of children's physical and mental health and development, the quality of healthcare services provided, factors influencing prevention, psychological support, and equitable access to health services.

1. **Education:**
   This dimension addresses early childhood readiness, quality of learning, enrollment rates, educational equity, and support for priority groups.
2. **Social and Cultural Context and Well-being:**
   This dimension presents the family, community, and cultural factors that shape children's daily experiences and influence their psychological and social well-being.
3. **Protection and National Policies :**
   This dimension reviews the legislative and regulatory frameworks that safeguard children's rights, the mechanisms of protection, monitoring, and enforcement, the pathways to justice, and the integration among relevant entities.
4. **Environment and Sustainability :**
   This dimension highlights the impact of surrounding environments (school, built, and natural) on children's health and safety, as well as national efforts to promote environmental awareness and sustainable behavior.
5. **Contribution of Non-Profit Sector :**
   This dimension examines the role of non-profit organizations in supporting childhood through programs and services provided to children and their families, as well as their level of integration with government efforts. It also addresses challenges related to governance, sustainability, and impact measurement.

This dimensional classification provides an integrated perspective on the state of childhood. It contributes to directing national efforts toward clear priorities that support child well-being and the achievement of the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030.



Physical and Mental Health

Physical and Mental Health

The Physical and Mental Health dimension sheds light on the state of children's health in Saudi Arabia from 2023 to 2024, through an analysis of the main trends regarding prevention and immunization, mental health, nutrition and growth, school health, and protection from risks.

It reviews the most significant achievements fulfilled within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 and its transformational programs, alongside existing challenges that affect the quality of health services provided to children. This aims to offer a concise and systematic reading that supports understanding gaps, improving cross-sectoral integration, and enhancing children's quality of life.



This dimension addresses five core issues that represent the areas with the greatest impact on children's health:

1. Preventive health and immunization, including immunization coverage and early screening.
2. Mental health and social support, including anxiety and depression disorders, as well as family and school support.
3. Growth, nutrition, and breastfeeding, including stunting, underweight, and obesity.
4. School health for children, including school health screening, physical activity, and school nutrition.
5. Health protection from risks, including injuries, drowning, abuse, and environmental safety.

These issues form an integrated framework for understanding the state of child health, documenting efforts, and identifying areas that require direct intervention to strengthen prevention and improve the quality of care.

The health sector witnessed extensive and integrated national efforts across the five core child health issues. In the area of preventive health and immunization, Saudi Arabia worked to raise the coverage of essential vaccines to levels exceeding 95%, and to expand early screening for newborns to include more than 94% of births. These efforts were complemented by strengthened epidemiological surveillance through specialized initiatives such as the "Digital Twin," as well as by reinforcing prevention systems within primary healthcare and school health programs. Immunization and screening services were also linked to the unified health record through advanced digital platforms such as Nphies and Sehhaty, contributing to improved follow-up and enhanced access.

For the field of mental health and social support, efforts expanded through national programs such as "A Society Thriving with Mental Health," the launch of wide-ranging awareness activities, and the development of mental health support services within primary healthcare. These efforts were accompanied by family counseling initiatives and awareness programs addressing common conditions such as anxiety, depression, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder. Certain mental health components were also incorporated into school programs, though there is a need to expand them. Digital tools such as Qareboon were launched to support mental health services.

In regard to growth and nutrition, efforts involved updating the national regulations related to infant and young child foods through the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, activating nutrition awareness programs, and strengthening breastfeeding initiatives through programs such as the Baby-Friendly Hospital program, in addition to issuing guidance manuals for caregivers and families. Some early nutritional screening policies were also supported within primary healthcare centers, alongside the expansion of initiatives related to school nutrition and physical activity.

In children's school health, Saudi Arabia expanded the implementation of the national exploratory screening program, which covered more than one million students, in addition to health awareness initiatives and educational programs on infection prevention, nutrition, and physical activity in schools. The school environment also witnessed the introduction of certain anti-bullying and psychological support initiatives, albeit with varying levels of coverage. The Ministries of Education, Health, and Sport collaborated on activities aimed at improving physical fitness and promoting healthy lifestyles among students.

With respect to protection from health and behavioral risks, Saudi Arabia witnessed notable efforts that included strengthening child protection systems, activating the Child Helpline 116111, linking the reports with health and social authorities, and improving responses to cases of abuse and violence. Efforts also extended to enhancing environmental and road safety initiatives, monitoring air and water quality, and implementing awareness campaigns on digital and behavioral risks that children may be exposed to.

These efforts, including their various levels, reflect a consistent national orientation toward strengthening children's health through pathways of prevention, treatment, family empowerment, school-based care, and comprehensive protection, in support of achieving the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Analysis and Comparison Matrix of Physical and Mental Health Indicators, with Trend Identification

This matrix provides a comparative analysis of children's physical and mental health indicators by linking them to the Sustainable Development Goals and national programs, and by identifying overall trends, levels of progress, and existing gaps.

Linkage to the Sustainable Development Goals Goal 3			**Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being;** Focuses on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, including children, through healthcare services, nutrition, and physical and mental health				
Related Targets			• Reduce maternal mortality rates • End child mortality under the age of five • Reduce premature mortality caused by non-communicable diseases. • Ensure access to reproductive health services and health education. • Reduce deaths and illnesses resulting from environmental pollution and exposure to hazardous chemicals • Support research and ensure access to affordable medicines and vaccines • End all forms of malnutrition among children under five years of age				
National Program			**Health Sector Transformation**			**Quality of Life**	
No.	**Priority Issues**	**Related National Indicators**	**Baseline (2023)**	**Value (2024)**	**National Target**	**Overall Trend**	**Source**
1	Survival, Nutrition, and Growth *(Child Well-being)*	Percentage of children aged 24–59 months who are on track in terms of health and development	Not available for previous years	82.33%	Increase the rate to above 90%	Relatively stable	General Authority for Statistics – *Early Childhood Development and Child Well-being Statistics Bulletin 2024.*
2	Preventive Health and Immunization *(Early Detection)*	Percentage of newborns who underwent early screening for genetic diseases	94.3%	96.8% annual average	100%, in accordance **with the screening procedures**	On an upward trend	Saudi Public Health Authority (**Waqaya**) – *Annual Reports 2023–2024.*
3	Comprehensive Care and Access to Services *(Children with Disabilities)*	Number of children in the National Disability Registry	68000	1,231,216	Linking government bodies with services	Under activation	Authority for the Care of Persons with Disabilities – *Annual Report 2024.*
4	Mental Health and Social Support *(Mental Disorders)*	Percentage of Saudis meeting the criteria for mental health disorders (lifetime diagnosis)	34% (lifetime diagnosis, 2016)	Not Available	Not quantitatively defined	Requires follow-up	King Salman Center – *Saudi National Mental Health Survey 2016.*
5	School Health *(School Health Screening)*	Number of students who underwent exploratory screening	1,232,719 Students	1,522,324 Students	Expansion of the initiative across all schools	Being implemented	Ministry of Health – *Annual Statistical Yearbooks 2023–2024.*
6	Health Protection from Risks *(Abuse)*	Number of reported cases of child abuse	350 Reported cases	Not Available	Targeted for reduction	Requires intervention	U.S. Department of State – *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2023.*

Table (8): Analytical and Comparative Matrix of Physical and Mental Health Indicators

Following the review of the indicators, this section provides a more detailed interpretation of the trends associated with each indicator by linking the figures with their health and social contexts and highlighting the national efforts and factors that have shaped the level of progress:

1. Indicator of Survival, Nutrition, and Growth–Child Well-being

Despite the stability of this indicator, it remains at a good level and close to the national target. The limited improvement may be attributed to the persistence of certain inappropriate dietary behaviors, challenges related to micronutrient deficiencies, and low levels of physical activity, as well as disparities in service availability, weak integration among entities, and limited early intervention programs.

2.Indicator of Preventive Health and Immunization – Early Detection

This indicator shows an upward trend and is approaching the national target, supported by the expansion of early screening implementation. Mandatory screening and its inclusion into preventive programs, along with the development of laboratories and digital platforms, in addition to awareness campaigns, genetic screening and healthy marriage programs, have contributed to enhancing the effectiveness of early detection and achieving this improvement.

3.Indicator of Integrated Care and Access to Services – Children with Disabilities

This indicator reflects progress in digital linkage and rehabilitation services. However, continued registration gaps, disparities in access among regions, limited awareness of some families, and shortages of specialized personnel constrain the achievement of the required level of inclusiveness, highlighting the need for stronger inter-agency integration and an enhanced role for the non-profit sector.

4 . Indicator of Mental Disorders

This indicator highlights the urgent need to improve early detection and strengthen school-based support, as current coverage remains limited due to the absence of a unified national system for monitoring children's cases, shortages of mental health professionals, and weak inclusion of mental health services within schools. This underscores the need to enhance screening and awareness programs and to develop more accurate databases.

5 . Indicator of School Health – School Health Screening

This indicator remains low compared to the national target, underscoring the need to expand school-based health screening. This is linked to the absence of a unified system for comprehensive screening, the limitation of efforts to only seasonal initiatives, weak integration between health and education data, and the implementation of some screening activities outside the school setting, all of which reduce the effectiveness of early detection.

6. Indicator of Health Protection from Risks – Abuse

This indicator reflects a continued need to reduce cases of abuse and improve the effectiveness of interventions, despite existing reporting and protection efforts. This is associated with underreporting in some cases due to social stigma or limited awareness, difficulties in reaching remote areas, the need for greater integration among entities, as well as weak community awareness and confidentiality safeguards, all of which affect the system's ability to reduce reported cases.

In light of the analysis of children's health situation and the trends in care and prevention indicators, the report moves to the education dimension as a complementary extension of child health and well-being, with the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of children's developmental journey within the school environment.


Education

Education

The education dimension sheds light on the state of children's education in Saudi Arabia from 2023 to 2024, through an analysis of key trends in enrollment, quality of education and academic achievement, school discipline, early education, digital education, and support for priority groups. The dimension reviews the most significant educational achievements fulfilled within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 and its transformational programs -on top of them the Human Capability Development Program- alongside existing challenges that continue to affect the quality of educational outcomes and the equity of access for all children. This dimension aims to provide a concise and systematic reading that supports understanding the core gaps within the education system, strengthens integration between schools, families, and communities, and supports efforts to enhance the quality of learning.



This dimension addresses eight core educational issues that represent the areas with the greatest impact on children's educational journey:

1. Early childhood education, including the expansion of kindergartens, the quality of learning environments, and developmental learning standards
2. Enrollment and compulsory education, through analysis of enrollment rates at the primary, intermediate, and secondary levels, as well as gender-based and geographic disparities
3. School discipline and learning continuity, including attendance, completion, and dropout rates
4. Quality of education and academic achievement, including results of national and international assessments (TIMSS, PISA), and the education of priority groups such as children with disabilities, out-of-school children, and students in remote areas.
5. Gender equality, through tracking gaps between males and females across different educational stages.
6. Partnership with family and community and its role in supporting academic achievement and participation in the educational process.
7. Digital education and learning continuity, including digital infrastructure, learning platforms, and teacher readiness.

Together, these issues provide an integrated framework for understanding children's education in Saudi Arabia and identifying urgent priorities for improving educational quality and ensuring equitable and inclusive education for all children.

The analysis of these issues extends to provide a clearer picture of the educational experience that children undergo in Saudi Arabia, along with the associated opportunities and challenges that influence their learning pathways from the early years through the completion of secondary education. Whereas in early childhood education, this dimension highlights the importance of the foundational years which is considered the stage in which initial linguistic, cognitive, and social skills are formed. While Saudi Arabia has witnessed notable expansion in learning environments and quality programs, a clear gap persists between actual enrollment rates and national targets. This reflects the need to strengthen family awareness, provide specialized educational staff, and enhance capacity across different regions.

The analysis also sheds light on enrollment in compulsory education as a key indicator of the education system's capacity to accommodate all children within the official age groups. The data indicate expansion across primary, intermediate, and secondary stages; however, subtle disparities stand out between regions and population groups due to linkages with geographic or social factors or to school transportation arrangements, which may affect children's regular attendance and continuity of learning.

The importance of school discipline also emerges as a reflection of school quality and its ability to retain and motivate students. Trends indicate generally good levels of attendance and completion, alongside limited patterns of repeated absenteeism happen among certain groups that may face family, behavioral, or educational challenges. This intersects clearly with education quality indicators reflected in national and international assessment results, where Saudi Arabia has achieved noticeable improvement in the early grades, compared with greater challenges in the intermediate level, particularly in Science and Reading. These gaps highlight the need to further develop teaching approaches and strengthen the depth of learning within classrooms.

The analysis also addresses the education of priority groups, such as children with disabilities, children in remote areas, and children of non-citizen residents. While Saudi Arabia has expanded the implementation of inclusive education and developed resource rooms and support programs, disparities in service quality and staff readiness remain a challenge, requiring additional efforts to ensure equity. Gender-related data further reveal a shifting pattern across educational stages, with a clear advantage for females at the primary level, followed by a gradual balance that tends to favor males at higher stages. This reflects social and contextual factors that call for targeted interventions to ensure girls' continued participation in education.

The pivotal role of the family also emerges as a key partner in supporting academic achievement and discipline, where data indicate high levels of family engagement in monitoring, communication, and shared reading, reflecting the impact of national programs aimed at strengthening partnerships between families and schools. Digital education likewise represents a growing area to support learning, since data reveal widespread use of digital platforms and the availability of digital infrastructure among most families. However, disparities exist in usage levels and digital skills among students and teachers, underscoring the need to enhance staff readiness and to more deeply integrate digital practices into the educational process.

This comprehensive reading reveals that the education system in Saudi Arabia is undergoing a broad transformation encompassing policies, curricula, school environments, and supporting technologies. Nevertheless, it continues to face challenges that require stronger integration between schools, families, and community-support entities to ensure higher-quality and more inclusive education, strengthen children's ability to acquire future-ready skills, and achieve the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030.



These issues have resulted in a set of indicators, as presented in the following table:

Analysis and Comparison Matrix of Education Indicators, with Trend Identification

This matrix provides a comparative analysis of children's education indicators by linking them to the Sustainable Development Goals and national programs, and by identifying overall trends, levels of progress, and existing gaps.

Linkage to the Sustainable Development Goals Goal 4			Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.				
Related Targets			• Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes by 2030. • Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for vulnerable groups, including children in vulnerable situations. • Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all. • Improve the quality of learning and the effectiveness of assessment to enhance skills and learning outcomes. • Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education by 2030.				
National Program			Human Capability Development				
No.	Priority Issues	Related National Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Value (2024)	National Target	Overall Trend	Source
1	Early Childhood Education	Kindergarten enrollment rate for 2025	21%	36%	40% for 2025	Improvement	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024- Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
2	Education Enrollment	Student enrollment rate (ages 6–14)	Not available	83%	Not available	Significant improvement	Education Indicator in Saudi Arabia – 2022, issued by OECD
		Student enrollment rate (ages 15–19)	Not available	51.6%	Not available	Significant improvement	
3	School Discipline	Discipline indicator within the educational environment	0.3 for 2019	Not available	0.35 For 2025	Improvement	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
4	Quality of Education and Academic Achievement	Student performance indicator in PISA (Reading, Science, and Mathematics)	386 points	394 points	500 Points for 2030	Improvement	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
5	Education of Priority Groups	Percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in educational institutions	1.4% (2019)	4.8%	20% for 2025	Slight improvement	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
6	Partnership with Family and Community	Rate of enhanced family participation in preparing for their children's future for the year 2025	37% for 2019	Not available	80% for 2025	Slight improvement	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024

Table (9): Analytical and Comparative Matrix of Education Indicators

Following the review of the education indicators, this section provides a more detailed interpretation of the trends associated with each indicator, by linking the results with the educational and social contexts and highlighting the national efforts and the factors that have either shaped progress or hindered the achievement of targets. This analysis enables a deeper understanding of the nature of educational gaps and helps guide interventions toward enhancing quality and equity, as well as improving learning continuity across different groups of children.

1 . Indicator of Early Childhood Education- Kindergarten Enrollment

This indicator reflects the capacity of the early childhood education system to accommodate children aged 3–5 years. Despite growth in the number of kindergartens and improvements in learning environments, progress remains slow compared to the national target. The current gap can be attributed to multiple factors, including: limited capacity in public kindergartens, unbalanced geographic distribution across regions, shortages of specialized early childhood education staff, and high operating costs within the private sector. Family awareness also plays a role, as some families continue to view early education as a non-essential stage, which limits enrollment. This is compounded by the need to further develop enabling regulations and to integrate educational technologies at this stage.

2. Indicator of Education Enrollment- Ages 6-14 and 15-19

This indicator demonstrates the education system's capacity to ensure compulsory education and continuity across different stages. While enrollment rates for students aged 6–14 reflect significant progress and broad coverage of basic education, enrollment rates for the 15–19 age group reveal tangible gaps related to dropout, low motivation, and the tendency of some youth to enter the labor market early. Economic and social conditions also affect the continuity of education for certain students, in addition to the limited availability of technical and vocational education pathways, insufficient awareness of the importance of completing secondary education, and the scarcity of academic and social support programs for underperforming groups.

3. Indicator of School Discipline

This indicator reflects the extent of students' adherence to educational behaviors and their regular attendance at school. It represents one of the core pillars for improving academic achievement. Despite extensive national efforts to implement electronic attendance monitoring systems, activate student counseling services, and launch initiatives that aim to reduce bullying and violence, gaps persist. These gaps are evident in inconsistencies in the enforcement of regulations across schools, weaknesses in some technical systems, and the limited availability of psychological and behavioral support in certain educational settings. In addition, social pressures, economic conditions, and family-related challenges faced by some students contribute to irregular attendance and reduced commitment.

4. Indicator of Education Quality and Academic Achievement- PISA

This indicator reflects students' ability to apply reading, mathematics, and science skills in real-life situations. It serves as an international benchmark for measuring the quality of education. Despite significant efforts in curriculum development, professional training, and digital transformation, the gap between current performance and the target remains substantial. This is associated with weaknesses in deep reading skills, the continued reliance on traditional teaching methods, disparities in teaching competencies across subject areas, and limited activation of educational technologies within classrooms. In addition, limited family awareness of the importance of international assessments plays a role in lower levels of preparation and motivation among some students.

5. Indicator of Education for Priority Groups- Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

This indicator measures the education system's capacity to achieve inclusiveness and provide equitable opportunities for children with disabilities. Despite the expansion of inclusive education programs and the equipping of schools with assistive technologies, the gap between the target and actual outcomes remains wide. This is linked to shortages of qualified personnel capable of addressing different types of disabilities, disparities in service provision across regions, the high cost of equipping schools, and limited societal awareness of the importance of inclusion, in addition to the need to improve the curriculum to accommodate diverse needs. Another challenge persists in the lack of flexible educational options specifically designed for certain disabilities.

6. Indicator of Family and Community Partnership

This indicator reflects the role of the family as a fundamental partner in supporting academic achievement and career guidance. Despite the digital platforms and awareness programs having enhanced family engagement, the existing gap is associated with variations in educational awareness among families, limited interaction with career-oriented programs, and a gap between parents' expectations and modern curriculum models, in addition to the limited availability of the qualitative measurement tools for family partnership. Differences in the level of digital literacy among families also affect their capacity for effective follow-up and sustained support.

Following the analysis of the state of education, enrollment trends, learning quality, and the roles of families and schools, the report moves to the Social and Cultural Context and Well-being
dimension, being the broader framework within which children's daily experiences, values, relationships, and psychological and social well-being are shaped.



Social and Cultural Context and Well-being

Social and Cultural Context and Well-being

The social and cultural context and well-being dimension sheds light on the social and cultural environment in which children and adolescents grew up in Saudi Arabia during 2023–2024. This is achieved through an analysis of the situation of the Saudi family, the level of children's participation in cultural, artistic, and recreational activities, and their access to facilities and services that support quality of life, such as museums, libraries, community centers, and national events. The dimension also reviews national trends related to identity and values, digital transformation, community participation, and social inclusion programs, within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 and the Quality of Life Program, as the governing frameworks for contemporary social and cultural policies. This dimension aims to provide a comprehensive reading that supports understanding how the social and cultural context is reflected in children's mental health, identity, skills, and overall well-being.



This dimension addresses several core issues that form the social and cultural foundation influencing children's upbringing and quality of life, including:

1. Strengthening the role and well-being of the family, including the cohesion of the Saudi family, its role in child upbringing, childcare and early childhood care services, and support for families' material welfare.
2. Fostering the national identity and promoting cultural values, including authentic Saudi values and traditions, cultural diversity across regions, and programs that strengthen children's sense of national belonging.
3. Culture, recreation, and sports for children, encompassing cultural, artistic, and sports activities, as well as child-friendly events and facilities that develop children's skills and support them socially.
4. Traditional and digital media targeting children, including meaningful and age-appropriate content for young audiences, and the role of digital media and platforms in shaping children's knowledge and values.
5. Digital transformation and the development of children's digital capacities, including digital access, the use of devices and platforms, and the development of safe digital skills that support learning and participation.
6. Community participation and youth development, including children's participation in community and volunteer activities, personality development programs, and school councils.
7. Social services and social inclusion, including foster care and community centers, programs that aim at the integration of orphans and children with disabilities, and ensuring equitable access to facilities and services.

Together, these issues contribute to forming an integrated picture of the cultural and social environment surrounding children, and to identifying strengths, opportunities, and challenges that call for targeted interventions to support their development and empowerment.

The analysis of these issues extends to present a deeper insight into how children's social and cultural experiences are shaped in Saudi Arabia, as well as the associated opportunities and challenges that influence their well-being, identity, and daily behavior. With regard to strengthening the role and well-being of the family, the analysis highlights the centrality of the Saudi family in a child's life and the family role in upbringing, parenting, and values formation. The analysis also highlights the role of social and economic support programs in promoting family stability and strengthening the capability to provide a safe developmental environment. It addresses the growing provision of childcare and day-care services as an important factor in empowering parents and enhancing overall family quality of life.

In relation to fostering the national identity and promoting cultural values, the report sheds light on initiatives aimed at instilling the Saudi identity among children through cultural activities, heritage events, modern curricula, and programs that introduce children to the diversity of cultures and authentic values across Saudi regions. In this context, national efforts to strengthen belonging and pride emerge as key contributors to shaping children's personality and self-confidence.

Regarding culture, recreation, and sports for children, the analysis illustrates the expansion of the cultural and recreational landscape dedicated to young people, ranging from festivals and artistic activities to sports programs and child-friendly facilities in the cities and public parks. These activities play a significant role in developing creativity, building social relationships, and promoting more active and healthy lifestyles, while also highlighting the need to expand coverage and address the disparities in opportunities across regions. With respect to traditional and digital media targeted at children, the analysis emphasizes the significant role of media in shaping children's awareness and values, whether through TV channels, interactive applications, or digital content. While national efforts have focused on providing meaningful, safe, and age-appropriate content, challenges still exist in ensuring the quality of content, alignment with cultural values, and guiding children within a rapidly evolving digital environment.

The analysis further extends to digital transformation and the development of children's digital capabilities, revealing the increasing prevalence of digital devices and platforms among children as well as the learning and creative opportunities they offer, alongside challenges related to excessive or unsafe use. This underscores the importance of building safe digital skills, providing reliable educational and recreational content, and supporting families in supervising and guiding children's digital engagement.

The dimension also addresses community participation and youth development, reflecting children's ability to engage in volunteer and social activities, as well as participate in student councils and personality development programs. The analysis demonstrates the greater role of these initiatives in strengthening self-confidence, building leadership skills, and fostering citizenship values and social responsibility.

Finally, the report examines social services and social inclusion, including community centers, foster care, and supporting programs targeting orphans and children with disabilities, as well as initiatives aimed at ensuring equitable access to cultural, educational, and recreational services and facilities. The analysis reveals progress in inclusion programs, alongside the need to further strengthen efforts to ensure genuine inclusiveness and to empower all children to participate in social and cultural life without discrimination.

This comprehensive reading reflects that the social and cultural context in Saudi Arabia is undergoing a broad transformation encompassing family values, national identity, cultural content, and recreational and digital spaces. However, it continues to require stronger integration among families, communities, and government bodies to ensure a more supportive, inclusive, and well-being-oriented environment for all children, in line with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 in building a vibrant and cohesive society.



These issues resulted in a set of indicators, as presented in the following table:

Analysis and Comparison Matrix of Social and Cultural Context and Well-being Indicators, with Trend Identification

Linkage to the Sustainable Development Goals 2 & 4	Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
Related Target	End hunger and ensure all people, particularly the poor and those in vulnerable situations, including children, have access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round by 2030 ○ End all forms of malnutrition by 2025, including achieving internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting among children under five, and addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons. ○ Promoting education that reinforces values of sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, culture of peace, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity. This includes the inclusion of arts and cultural activities in early childhood education.
National Program	Human Capability Development

No.	Priority Issues	Related National Indicators	Baseline (2023)	Value (2024)	National Target	Overall Trend	Source
1	Fostering the National Identity and Promoting Cultural Values	Number of cultural event days	188	1682	600 by the second quarter of 2025	Not available	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
2	Culture, Recreation, and Sports for Children	Number of hobby clubs	Not available	1950	2580 by the second quarter of 2025	Not available	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
3		Percentage of children and adolescents engaging in at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity	1%	10%	21% by 2030	Not available	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030
4	Community Participation and Youth Development *(promoting values of positivity, resilience, and a culture of hard work)*	Average level of students' life satisfaction	Not available	Not available	8.12% by 2025	Not available	Human Capability Development Program Report 2024
5	Social Services and Social Inclusion	Number of volunteers	22.9 thousand volunteers	1237.7 thousand volunteers	1 million volunteers by 2030	Not available	Indicators of Saudi Vision 2030

Table (10): Analytical and Comparative Matrix of Social and Cultural Context and Well-being

Following the review of the social and cultural indicators, this section provides a more detailed interpretation of the trends associated with each indicator by linking the results to value-based and social contexts, and to cultural transformations in Saudi Arabia. It also highlights national efforts that have had a direct impact on enhancing cultural participation, supporting youth development, promoting volunteerism, and improving quality of life. This analysis helps clarify the gaps that continue to affect children's access to cultural, recreational, and social activities and guides interventions toward creating a more inclusive and thriving environment for them.

1. Number of Cultural Events Indicator - Fostering National Identity and Promoting Cultural Values

This indicator reflects the vitality of the national cultural landscape and its role in reinforcing an authentic Saudi identity and values among children. Major initiatives -such as Riyadh Season, Jeddah Season, AlUla Season, and Qiddiya project- have contributed to revitalizing cultural activity and providing informal educational platforms that enable children to engage in arts, science, and innovation. Nevertheless, participation remains geographically uneven, with activities concentrated in major cities while peripheral regions face limited access. The analysis also highlights the need to develop quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the impact of these events on children, given the limited availability of published data, and the weak systematic linkage between cultural programs and the actual needs of young people.

2 . Number of Hobby Clubs Indicator-Culture, Recreation, and Sport for Children

This indicator measures the capacity of cultural and recreational facilities to provide regular activities that develop children's talents and hobbies. Despite the expansion of options offered under the Quality of Life Program, many initiatives remain seasonal and lack sustainability, which limits their long-term impact on children. In addition, the distribution of clubs and hobby centers does not ensure balanced coverage across all regions, alongside the absence of an integrated system for measuring the impact of these programs on children's creative and motor skills. This constrains their effectiveness in building children's capabilities and empowering them culturally and cognitively.

3. Indicator of Engaging in 60 Minutes of Daily Physical Activity - Culture, Recreation, and Sports for Children

This indicator reflects healthy lifestyle patterns among children and adolescents and their ability to access opportunities for physical activity. Despite the expansion of sports programs in schools and communities, the data reveal weaknesses in continuity and adherence to the minimum recommended level of daily physical activity. This is attributed to the limited availability of child-friendly facilities, unequal access in peripheral regions, and family-related challenges in balancing digital and physical activities. These trends underscore the need for targeted interventions that strengthen school sports programs and activate the role of families in supporting more active lifestyles.

4 . Average Student's Life Satisfaction Indicator-Community Participation and Youth Development (Positivity, Resilience, and a Culture of Hard Work)

This indicator points to variation in students' levels of satisfaction with their social and psychological lives, reflecting the need to strengthen more supportive school and community environments. This may be linked to the impact of rapid social transformations on family stability and on its role in supporting children's participation, in addition to the absence of integrated policies that address psychological and social dimensions and connect school-based and community initiatives to enhance belonging, participation, and well-being.

5 . Number of Volunteers Indicator-Social Services and Social Inclusion

This indicator reflects the average level of students' satisfaction with life and their degree of community participation. Despite efforts to promote values of positivity, resilience, and a culture of hard work, ongoing social transformations and the limited stability of some families continue to constrain improvement in this indicator. Variations in satisfaction also point to the absence of integrated policies that address psychological and social aspects, and link school and community initiatives to provide supportive environments that strengthen belonging and participation.

Following the review of the features of the social and cultural context and its implications for children's well-being, relationships, and opportunities for participation, the report moves to the Protection and National Policies dimension.





Protection and National Policies

Protection and National Policies

Protecting children and ensuring their well-being constitute a fundamental pillar in building a cohesive and vibrant society. Saudi Arabia has accorded increasing attention to this area, recognizing children as the foundation of development and the cornerstone of the future. Guided by this principle, Saudi Arabia has, in recent years, worked to develop a comprehensive child protection system that integrates legislative and institutional frameworks with preventive and remedial programs, aiming at providing a safe environment free from violence, neglect, and exploitation, and promoting justice and equal opportunities for all children without discrimination. The period from 2023 to 2024 witnessed a qualitative shift in child protection policies and programs, including updates to national regulations, activation of monitoring and early response mechanisms, and strengthened coordination among the education, health, social care, and justice sectors. This reflects Saudi Arabia's commitment to international principles of children's rights, in alignment with Saudi societal values. This dimension reviews the status of child protection from legislative, institutional, and social perspectives, drawing on national and international data. It outlines developments in legislation, reporting and response mechanisms, and the integration of prevention, protection, and family support services, while highlighting the most vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, orphans, and children of non-citizen residents. Despite the progress achieved, the analysis underscores the continued need to improve equity in access to services in certain regions, strengthen inter-agency coordination, and build the capacities of the workforce to ensure a more inclusive and sustainable child protection system.



This dimension addresses the key issues representing the most influential areas affecting children's protection:

1. Shaping the Legislative Framework for Children's Rights
2. Legislation Related to Children's Rights
3. Access to Justice
4. Restorative Justice
5. Digital Protection
6. Protection from Violence and Abuse
7. Family Protection and Support for Care
8. Protection of Orphans and the Most Vulnerable Groups
9. Protection from Exploitation
10. Responsive and Supportive Services
11. Accountability and Oversight

This dimension reviews Saudi Arabia's child protection system from legislative, institutional and social perspectives, focusing on developments during 2023–2024 in building a modern legal framework aligned with national transformations and international conventions.

Saudi Arabia has consolidated the foundations of child protection by updating the regulations and establishing clear definitions of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and by strengthening preventive and remedial pathways within child-related legislation, including the Child Protection Law, the Protection from Abuse Law, the Anti-Harassment Law, and the Personal Status Law. This has been complemented by the adoption of the "Health in All Policies" approach, which integrates health, social, and educational determinants into decision-making processes. Joining multiple international conventions -most notably the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols- has also contributed to aligning the national legislation with global standards and ensuring the best interests of the child.

The dimension further examines the practical implementation of these regulations through executive mechanisms undertaken by relevant entities, such as the Public Prosecution, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Human Rights Commission, where roles are integrating across receiving reports, conducting investigations, providing immediate protection, issuing judicial orders, and delivering psychological and social care.

Within this context, the role of family protection units -the unified hotline (1919)- and support programs in schools and hospitals is particularly prominent. This is complemented by qualitative developments in the judiciary sector, which has adopted restorative justice approaches and alternatives to detention, thereby strengthening protection for the most vulnerable groups and ensuring procedural environments that respect their privacy and dignity. The dimension also addresses issues of violence, abuse, and exploitation by examining early detection mechanisms, school-based prevention programs, digital protection; given the high levels of internet use among children, and the growing prevalence of cyber risks. National efforts to enhance children's cybersecurity are highlighted through specialized policies and national initiatives (such as the Child Protection in Cyberspace Initiative), in addition to awareness campaigns and technical monitoring measures. The dimension further examines economic and social exploitation, such as child labor and begging, through the implementation of the national policy to prevent child labor, the expansion of social protection and family support programs, and the detection of violations through official channels that safeguard children and provide them with safe environments.

Finally, the dimension examines governance, accountability and community participation in child protection, highlighting the roles of the Human Rights Commission and the Family Affairs Council in oversight and national reporting. It also reviews the growing role of the non-profit sector in support, prevention and care, alongside the continuing need to strengthen its capacity and governance. Children's participation in expressing their views at school and in the community remains at an early stage and requires clearer frameworks and supportive platforms to involve them in decisions and policies that affect them. Together, these issues reflect a broad protection system focused on prevention, response and empowerment, aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and a safe, vibrant society that places children at the heart of development.

Child Protection in the International Context and Global Indicators

The KidsRights Index is one of the most prominent composite international indicators used to monitor the level of respect for and protection of children's rights across countries. The index is issued annually by the KidsRights Foundation in cooperation with Erasmus University, and is based on official data published by recognized international organizations, without relying on self-assessments or national surveys. This enhances its reliability and comparability at the international level.

Measurement Methodology and Index Components
The KidsRights Index measures countries' performance on a scale ranging from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating stronger levels of child rights protection. The index is comparative in nature; it does not set binding quantitative targets, but rather assesses countries' performance relative to one another, based on the maturity of institutional frameworks and public policies over the medium and long term.

The index consists of five core dimensions that collectively represent the various aspects of children's rights, as follows:

Right to Life:
This dimension includes indicators related to child survival and basic health, such as under-five mortality rates and severe malnutrition.

Right to Health:
This dimension measures levels of access to healthcare services, immunization coverage, and maternal and child health.

Right to Education:
This dimension includes indicators related to enrollment in basic education, continuity of schooling, and the quality of education.

Right to Protection:
This dimension measures the extent to which children are protected from violence, abuse, and exploitation, including child labor and early marriage.

Enabling Environment for Child Rights:
This is an institutional and structural dimension that measures the maturity of legal and regulatory frameworks, the level of civil society participation, children's involvement in decision-making, policy transparency and accountability mechanisms, and compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its monitoring mechanisms.

Interpretation of Scores and Value Implications

The values of the KidsRights Index can be interpreted as follows:

•0.80 – 1.00:
Very high performance, reflecting a mature child rights protection system that combines effective services and a supportive institutional environment.

•0.60 – 0.79:
Good to moderate performance, indicating the presence of established frameworks and services, alongside gaps in certain institutional or implementation aspects.

•Below 0.60:
Structural challenges in policies, services, or the enabling environment.

International experience shows that countries with higher rankings often achieve stronger performance in the enabling environment dimension, which is the most influential factor when differentiating between countries that achieved similar levels of performance in education, health, and protection.

Dimension	Index Value (2023)	Index Value (2024)	Trend Between Two Years	Value Implication
Right to Life	0.891	0.891	Relatively stable	A high value reflecting improvements in child survival indicators and basic healthcare
Right to Health	0.996	0.958	Slight decline	Very high performance in both years, with a slight decline in 2024 that does not alter the overall advanced level
Right to Education	0.894	0.894	Relatively stable	Strong performance reflecting the robustness of education policies and the assurance of access and continuity
Right to Protection	0.980	0.980	Relatively stable	Among the highest recorded values, reflecting the development of regulatory frameworks and the protection ecosystem
Enabling Environment for Child Rights	0.071	0.071	Relatively stable (at a low level)	A clear institutional gap compared to globally higher-performing countries

Methodological Note

The KidsRights Index is a structural indicator that is influenced by long-term institutional changes, which explains the limited year-on-year variation in its values, particularly in dimensions related to governance and the enabling environment, compared to implementation-oriented dimensions associated with service delivery.

Table (11): Current Indicators Monitoring Saudi Arabia's Performance in Child Protection According to the KidsRights Index (2023–2024)

Analytical Reading of Trends and Gaps

The table shows that the performance of Saudi Arabia across most dimensions of the global child rights index is characterized by stability at high levels, particularly in the dimensions of life, education, and protection. This reflects the maturity of national policies and the quality of executive services related to child protection.

Between 2023 and 2024, a slight decline is observed in the right to health dimension (from 0.996 to 0.958), without being out of the very high performance range. This may be associated with relative changes in some of the health indicators used within the index's international methodology.

By contrast, the enabling environment for child rights dimension remained at a consistently low value (0.071) over both years. This indicates that the primary gap is not linked to the level of services or the existence of legislative frameworks, but rather to the maturity of the institutional and regulatory environment that supports children's participation, enhancement of the participatory and oversight roles of civil society organizations, and the transparency of policies and accountability mechanisms.

The stability of the index values reflects the structural nature of the KidsRights Index, which is influenced more by the long-term institutional reforms than by the short-term initiatives. This underscores the importance of complementing executive efforts with the improvement of regulatory frameworks and the strengthening of institutional participation channels.

Implications of the Indicator in the Context of National Policies

The KidsRights Index serves as a supportive analytical tool for the development of evidence-based national policies, as it highlights the need to achieve a balance between the strength of services provided to children and the maturity of the institutional and regulatory environment that safeguards their rights. The performance improvements on this index, particularly in the enabling environment dimension, reflect a gradual transition toward a more comprehensive and sustainable protection system, in which statutory protection is integrated with community participation and institutional oversight.

In light of the assessment of Saudi Arabia's performance according to KidsRights Index, it becomes evident that progress achieved in executive and service-related aspects of child protection has contributed to attaining high and stable levels across several key dimensions. Conversely, the index results underscore the importance of moving beyond a sole focus on service quality toward strengthening the supportive institutional and regulatory environment, including policy integration, the development of data systems, and the expansion of participation and accountability channels.

Moving on, the report takes on the Environment and Sustainability dimension as a key factor in determining children's quality of life.



Environment and Sustainability

Environment and Sustainability

The environment and sustainability dimension highlights the environmental system in which children and adolescents in Saudi Arabia grow and develop during 2023 and 2024, through an analysis of the safety of their surrounding environment, air and water quality, green spaces, and built environments that support their physical and mental health.

The dimension also reviews national efforts aimed at building an environmentally aware society and achieving a sustainable balance between economic growth and the preservation of natural resources, within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030, and major initiatives such as the Saudi Green Initiative and the Circular Carbon Economy, which together form the strategic foundation of modern environmental policies. This dimension seeks to provide a comprehensive reading of how a sustainable environment is reflected in children's health, behaviors, well-being, and opportunities to participate in protecting their surrounding environment.



This dimension addresses four interconnected core issues that form the environmental and sustainability foundation influencing children's quality of life and upbringing, and that represent the key environmental priorities in Saudi Arabia:

1. Education, Awareness, and Participation:
   Developing environmental awareness among children and families through education, interactive initiatives, and conservation campaigns
2. Environment in National Policies:
   Integrating environmental considerations into education, health, housing, and transportation within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 and its executive programs
3. Children's Environments (School and Public Surroundings):
   Improving air and water quality and enhancing school and community infrastructure to ensure a safe and healthy environment for children
4. Governance and Readiness:
   Developing legislative frameworks and national institutions to safeguard children's environmental rights and ensure the sustainability of initiatives

These issues are integrated to form a comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of the environment on children's quality of life, health, and development. Thereby guiding efforts toward a safer and more sustainable environment for future generations.

The environment and sustainability domain has witnessed a qualitative expansion in child-focused initiatives, alongside the development of innovative awareness content that brings environmental concepts closer to the daily lives of children and youth. Initiatives such as Future Generations Initiative, Green Ramadan, and Namour Character have provided children with practical opportunities to understand environmentally responsible behavior through interactive activities, educational storytelling, and field-based programs that instill values of resource conservation and environmental responsibility.

Efforts to integrate sustainability into education reflect an important shift in the role of schools, as classroom environments and school initiatives have become spaces for applying environmental concepts through the environmental clubs, tree-planting programs, recycling projects, and green school initiatives. This approach has contributed to strengthening children's environmental skills and linking theoretical knowledge with everyday practices that support sustainable behavior and instill values of care for both the school environment and the surrounding neighborhood.

The promotion of the culture of responsible consumption has also emerged as a key focus of environmental action, through awareness initiatives that encourage families and children to reduce waste and rationalize the consumption of water, energy, and food resources. Programs such as Taqa Kids have helped simplify the energy efficiency concepts for children in engaging and easily applicable ways, contributing to the development of positive long-term environmental behaviors.

Children's interest in direct participation in environmental activities and green practices has also increased through tree-planting campaigns, recycling initiatives, environmental camps, and scouting activities. In parallel, the expansion of green spaces and urban projects -such as Riyadh Green- has supported the provision of safe and healthy environments that enable children to interact with nature and promote physical activity and psychological well-being. These initiatives form part of a broader orientation toward child-friendly cities and the improvement of air and water quality and waste management, ensuring safer and more sustainable living environments.

Collectively, these efforts reflect a coherent environmental transformation aimed at empowering Saudi children to become active contributors to building a sustainable environment through knowledge, practice, and community participation, thereby supporting the achievement of Saudi Vision 2030 objectives in building an environmentally aware society equipped with the skills and values necessary to protect its resources and shape its future. These issues resulted in a set of indicators, as presented in the following table:



Analysis and Comparison Matrix for Environmental and Sustainability Indicators, with Trend Identification

This matrix provides a comparative analysis of environment and sustainability indicators, examining their overall trends, levels of progress, and existing gaps.

Issue	Specific Indicator	Baseline	Value (2023–2024)	National Target (2030)	Overall Trend	Source
Access to Safe Water Services	Percentage of the population with access to safely managed drinking water services	99.4%% (2016)	99.91% (2022)	Maintaining the full coverage	Upward	The Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report , 2022
Wastewater Management	Percentage of Treated Wastewater Reused	-	25.2% (2023)	30%	Upward	General Authority for Statistics, *Environmental Statistics Bulletin, 2023*
Biodiversity and Conservation	Percentage of protected areas out of the total area of Saudi Arabia	4.33% (2016)	18.1% (2023)	30%	Upward	General Authority for Statistics, *Environmental Statistics Bulletin, 2023*
Carbon Emissions	Amount of carbon emissions reduced under the Saudi Green Initiative	—	.1.4 million tons annually	278 million tons annual reduction by 2030	Upward (improving)	General Authority for Statistics, *Renewable Energy Statistics Bulletin, 2022*
Urban Greening	Percentage of green cover in Riyadh city (Riyadh Green Project)	1.5% (2023)	-	9.1%	Upward	Saudi Vision 2030 Projects
Access to Electricity	Percentage of the population with access to electricity	99.9% (2023)	100% (2024)	100%	High	General Authority for Statistics, *2025*
Clean Fuel	Percentage of reliance on clean fuels, and modern technologies for household use	99.07% (2017)	98.23% (2022)	100%	Upward	The Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report , 2022
Green Schools and Tree Planting	Number of schools participating in tree-planting and recycling projects	—	80 schools / 212 thousand of planted seedlings (2024)	10 billion trees	Upward	Ministry of Education, *Annual Report, 2024*

Table (12): Analytical and Comparison Matrix of Environment and Sustainability Indicators

Following the review of environmental indicators, this section interprets each indicator's trends in relation to Saudi Arabia's regulatory, educational and environmental context. It highlights national efforts in awareness, policies, children's environments and governance, clarifies remaining gaps, and guides interventions to improve sustainability and quality of life for future generations.

1 . Indicator of Environmental Education, Awareness, and Participation

This indicator reflects the extent to which environmental education is disseminated among children and their capacity to adopt sound environmental behaviors. Despite the expansion of environmental campaigns and interactive activities, the integration of green education into early childhood remains limited, particularly in kindergartens. This can be attributed to the lack of unified content, weak coordination between educational and environmental entities, and the absence of systematic tools to measure the behavioral impact of campaigns on children and families. The analysis also highlights the challenge of shifting from theoretical consciousness to daily practice, underscoring the need to develop joint programs and unified content that promote sustainable environmental behavior from an early age.

2. Indicator of Environment in National Policies

This indicator illustrates the extent to which environmental policies are able to translate sustainability objectives into tangible impacts on children's health and well-being. While national frameworks related to climate, energy, and natural resource protection have improved, the absence of precise indicators to measure the impact of these policies on children limits the ability to assess intervention effectiveness and set accurate plans for them.

Weak institutional coordination across sectors also poses a challenge in ensuring the integration of executive programs related to childhood and the environment, highlighting the need to strengthen joint governance and activate follow-up and monitoring mechanisms that directly target the impact of policies on children.

3 . Indicator of Quality of the Children's Environments (School and Public Surroundings)

This indicator reflects the safety level of the environments in which children spend a significant part of their day, including air quality, ventilation, green spaces, and child-friendly facilities. Despite the expansion of major urban projects aimed at improving the built environment, environmental monitoring systems within schools remain limited and do not provide regular data on air quality or indoor environmental conditions. In addition, children's surrounding environments obviously vary across regions, creating an environmental equity gap and underscoring the need to strengthen monitoring infrastructure and improve the quality of children's environments in schools, parks, and residential neighborhoods.

4. Indicator of Governance and Institutional Readiness

Institutional readiness remains limited despite ongoing efforts, reflecting the insufficient integration of children's environmental issues into national regulatory frameworks and the need to strengthen implementing entities' capacity to address these issues effectively.

There is an urgent need to build the capacities of the implementing institutions, develop sustainable financing mechanisms, and strengthen coordination among relevant entities to ensure the sustainability of child-focused environmental initiatives. Enhancing institutional readiness also requires the establishment of clear accountability and reporting frameworks that ensure alignment of the executive policies with the environmental protection targets and the upbringing of an environmentally aware generation.

After reviewing the situation of the environment and sustainability, and the challenges and opportunities they pose for children's daily lives, the report moves on to examine the role of the non-profit sector, which represents a vital contributor to supporting child protection, expanding the scope of community services, and strengthening integration between national efforts and community-based initiatives.





Contribution of Non-profit Sector to the Childhood Sector

Contribution of Non-profit Sector to the Childhood sector

The non-profit sector represents one of the most important pillars of the childhood ecosystem in Saudi Arabia, having contributed in recent years to expanding the scope of the educational, health, and social opportunities provided to children. This has also been driven by a more mature regulatory environment and stronger alignment with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030. Modern governance frameworks and the empowerment of non-profit organizations have enhanced their capacities to deliver specialized services, develop their own resources, and engage in broad partnerships with government bodies and the private sector, thereby reinforcing their role as effective development partners.

This dimension covers a set of issues that reflect the position of the non-profit sector in supporting childhood-related causes, including:

1. Financial support and mechanisms of funding and sustainability that ensure the continuity of programs and services.
2. Institutional coordination and representation of childhood-focused associations to enhance the effectiveness of efforts and unify their paths.
3. Executive entities and field initiatives that deliver direct programs affecting children's lives.
4. Community partnership and open innovation, enabling new solutions and broader community engagement.
5. Contributions to regulatory, policy, and legislative processes that frame the work of associations and define their standards.

In this context, Saudi Arabia has witnessed a significant expansion in educational associations supporting early childhood that contribute to the opening of new kindergarten classrooms and the delivery of enrichment programs aimed at improving learning quality. Initiatives to integrate children with disabilities have also emerged through specialized centers and successful rehabilitation models.

With regard to the health sector, associations have played impactful roles in providing therapeutic and rehabilitative services to thousands of children with critical conditions or special needs, and have helped alleviate the burden on families through extended care programs and medical and social support.

Within the context of strengthening thematic coordination of the childhood-related issues, a community of institutions concerned with childcare stood out as a distinctive civil initiative launched by Talal Foundation under the umbrella of the Council of Non-Profit Institutions. The initiative aims to improve the non-profit work in the childhood sector by shifting from fragmented initiatives toward a more organized and integrated sectoral approach, grounded in knowledge-building and efforts unification. The Community was designed as a participatory platform that brings together the relevant non-profit entities, facilitates the exchange of expertise, monitors the state of the sector, and directs interventions toward the national priorities and the most impactful gaps, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the non-profit work and increasing the efficiency of its social impact.

Among the Community's outputs, the report titled "Matrix of Institutions Concerned with Children in Saudi Arabia" was issued in 2024 as an analytical and organizational tool aimed at building a knowledge base on the map of the non-profit organizations working in the field of childhood. The report analyzes the organization's areas of intervention and geographic coverage, in support of data-driven planning and the strengthening of integration among existing efforts. It represents one of the Community's applied outputs and reflects its role in moving from descriptive work toward structured analytical diagnosis.

From a long-term perspective, the Community aspires to establish an integrated, system-based approach to addressing childhood issues, contributing to the alignment of non-profit initiatives with the national priorities and strengthening multi-sector partnerships, thereby enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of social impact. In pursuit of this objective, the Community works to develop a comprehensive understanding of the non-profit organizations map, reduce duplication of initiatives, and direct resources toward priority areas and high-impact gaps, while also supporting decision-makers through the provision of knowledge and analyses that inform the development of childhood-related policies and programs.

In terms of outcomes, the Community's work has produced analytical results that contributed to describing the status of the non-profit sector in the childhood sector, including patterns of geographic distribution, levels of spatial concentration of interventions, and prevailing areas of focus. It also highlighted a number of sectoral gaps in specific priority domains and environments. Moreover, the most significant output of this community is the development of an organizational matrix of non-profit organizations, which has served as a reference to support planning, guide resource allocation, build partnerships, and strengthen coordination among relevant entities, thereby enhancing the efficiency of non-profit work and supporting its progression toward greater organization and sustainability in serving childhood-related issues.

The Community's operational mechanisms are based on activating practical collaboration among non-profit organizations, in integration with government bodies, the private sector, experts, and specialists. This is achieved through operational pathways that include organizing specialized meetings and workshops, facilitating strategic partnerships, and supporting the development of joint initiatives that respond to priority needs within the childhood sector. The Community also contributes to strengthening knowledge-based planning by supporting sectoral studies and analyses, providing organizational tools that help in understanding the landscape of entities working in the childhood sector and facilitating sustainable coordination among them, thereby ensuring integration of roles and the continuity of social impact across the sector.

The sector has also played a pivotal role in protecting the most vulnerable groups by operating shelter centers, activating initiatives to protect children from abuse, and caring for orphans through a broad network of specialized associations covering various regions of Saudi Arabia. In the cultural and community context, the sector has delivered a wide range of cultural, artistic, and educational activities that support the development of the national identity and foster creativity among children, alongside enrichment programs and centers that have provided high-quality experiences enabling the growth of children's skills and capacities.

Despite the sector's growing efforts to diversify its resources, enhance its digital platforms, and raise levels of transparency, the childhood issues particularly continue to face limitations in data that clarify the actual scale of contributions and efforts directed toward children. To date, there is insufficient information to track the impact of these efforts, define the scope of beneficiaries, or provide a comprehensive picture of geographic coverage, in addition to the absence of integrated documentation of long-term impact.

Current trends point to significant opportunities to enhance the sector's impact through improved coordination, develop national databases that demonstrate the range of outreach to children, stimulate partnerships with the private sector, and empower innovation in programs and services to ensure their sustainability and capacity to meet children's needs across different regions.

Through these growing contributions, the non-profit sector continues to consolidate its role as a key partner in child protection, development, and the advancement of child well-being, while building a participatory model that enhances quality of life for future generations in alignment with Saudi Vision 2030.



Analysis and Comparison Matrix of Non-profit Sector Indicators, with Trend Identification

This matrix provides a comparative analysis of non-profit sector indicators, examining their overall trends, levels of progress, and existing gaps, in light of the lack of child-specific data and the absence of specific information for the childhood sector and its indicators.

Domain	Issue	Specific Indicator	Baseline	Value	National Target	Overall Trend	Source
Volunteerism Development	Volunteers	Number of Volunteers Index	834,300 Volunteers (2023)	1,237,713 (2024(	1,000,000	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Volunteerism Development	Volunteer Hours	Number of Volunteer Hours Index	53 Million Volunteer Hours (2023)	80,117,736 (2024(	-	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Institutional Expansion	Non-Profit Organizations	Number of Non-profit Organizations Index	1, 4,514 (2023)	5,700 Organizations (2024)	Not available	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Financial Sustainability	Economic Contribution	Non-Profit Sector Contribution to GDP Index	0.87% (2025)	0.99% (2024)	5%	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Governance	Compliance	Compliance of Associations with Governance Standards Index	85% (2023)	-	Not available	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Regulation and Policies	Regulatory Decisions	Number of Issued Regulatory Decisions	Not Available	61 Decisions (2024(	Not Available	Upward	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Regulation and Policies	Legislation	Percentage of Completion of the Legislative Environment Development Initiative	0	43% (2024)	33%	Exceeded	National National National National National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Financial Support	Donations	Volume of Donations through Official Platforms	Not Available	15 Billion Riyals (2024)	Not Defined	Upward	King Khalid Foundation – *Horizons of the Non-Profit Sector, 2025*
Financial Support	Endowments	Assets of Investment Endowment Funds	Not Available	1.7 Billion Riyals (2024(	Not Defined	Upward	King Khalid Foundation – *Horizons of the Non-Profit Sector, 2025*
Institutional	Educational	Number of Non-Profit	[illegible]	173 entities	[illegible]	[illegible]	King Abdullah Foundation –Waref Almarifa: Non-

Table (13): Analytical and Comparison Matrix of Non-profit Sector

Domain	Issue	Specific Indicator	Baseline	Value	National Target	Overall Trend	Source
Volunteerism	Volunteering Opportunities	Number of registered volunteering opportunities in education	Not available	159,539 Opportunities (2024(	Not defined	Upward	King Abdullah Foundation – Waref Almarifa: Non-Profit Education in Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 2025
Volunteerism	Volunteer Hours	Number of registered volunteer hours in the education sector	Not available	20,760,436 Hours (2024(	Not defined	Upward	King Abdullah Foundation – Waref Almarifa: Non-Profit Education in Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 2025
Volunteerism	Economic Return	Value of the economic return of volunteering	Not available	1.388 Billion Riyals (2024(	Not defined	Upward	National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Oversight	Violations	Number of detected violations related to fundraising	Not available	81 Violations (2023–2024(	Not defined	Upward	National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Oversight	Reports	Number of recorded reports and complaints	Not available	1,032 (2023–2024)	Not defined	Upward	National National National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development Annual Report (2023–2024)
Partnerships	Research Funding	Number of active granting institutions in education and research	Not available	25 Institutions (2024(	Not defined	Upward	King Abdullah Foundation – Waref Almarifa: Non-Profit Education in Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 2025
Partnerships	Research Centers	Number of active research centers in education and childhood	Not available	11 Centers (2024(	Not defined	Upward	King Abdullah Foundation – Waref Almarifa: Non-Profit Education in Saudi Arabia, Annual Report 2025
		non-profit sector					*Profit Sector, 2025*

Table (13): Analytical and Comparison Matrix of Non-profit Sector

Moving from the quantitative presentation of the indicator matrix to a deeper interpretive reading, this section focuses on analyzing the key issues that explain the existing gaps in the role of the non-profit sector, through an examination of the structural, regulatory, and financing factors associated with each issue.

1. Issue of Financial Support and Sustainability

Despite legislative and funding-related developments in the sector, data on funding allocated specifically to the childhood sector remain limited and insufficiently disaggregated, making it challenging to estimate the actual level of investment and its geographic distribution. The analysis also highlights the lack of integration among funding platforms and the weak activation of sustainable financing instruments such as endowments and investment funds. The concentration of funding in major cities further deprives peripheral regions of regular childhood-focused programs, thereby deepening the development equity gap.

2. Issue of Institutional Coordination and Representation

The data indicate overlaps in roles between specialized non-profit organizations and childhood associations, which leads to the duplication of services and weak integration. Representation of the non-profit organizations in coordinating committees also remains limited, alongside a lack of participation incentives and weak data exchange with government bodies. The absence of official indicators to measure coordination effectiveness further complicates the development of a participatory model capable of improving the quality of the childhood sector services.

3. Issue of Field Initiatives and Operational Services

This issue reflects a clear disparity in access to childhood-related services between major urban centers and peripheral regions. In addition, the absence of a national database tracking the number of beneficiaries or the types of services provided limits the ability to measure the existing gaps accurately and target the programs effectively. The lack of coordination between government initiatives and non-profit organizations, alongside the overlapping roles, further undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery on the ground.

4. Issue of Community Partnership and Innovation

Despite the presence of some community-based initiatives, the overall picture remains unclear regarding the level of private sector investment in childhood-related programs or the scale of social and digital innovation directed toward children. Saudi Arabia also lacks specialized social innovation incubators focused on childhood solutions. Limited engagement of families and children in the design of initiatives, together with the absence of reliable data on volunteering within childhood programs, represents a key constraint on the sector's ability to develop sustainable, community-driven solutions.

5. Issue of Regulation, Policies and Legislation

The data reveal gaps in tracking policies and regulatory decisions related to childhood within the non-profit sector. The governance framework also requires more precise and in-depth refinement to ensure the quality and sustainability of non-profit organizations' operations, and to strengthen their compliance with national standards. Furthermore, mechanisms for assessing the actual impact of legislation on the sector's performance remain underdeveloped

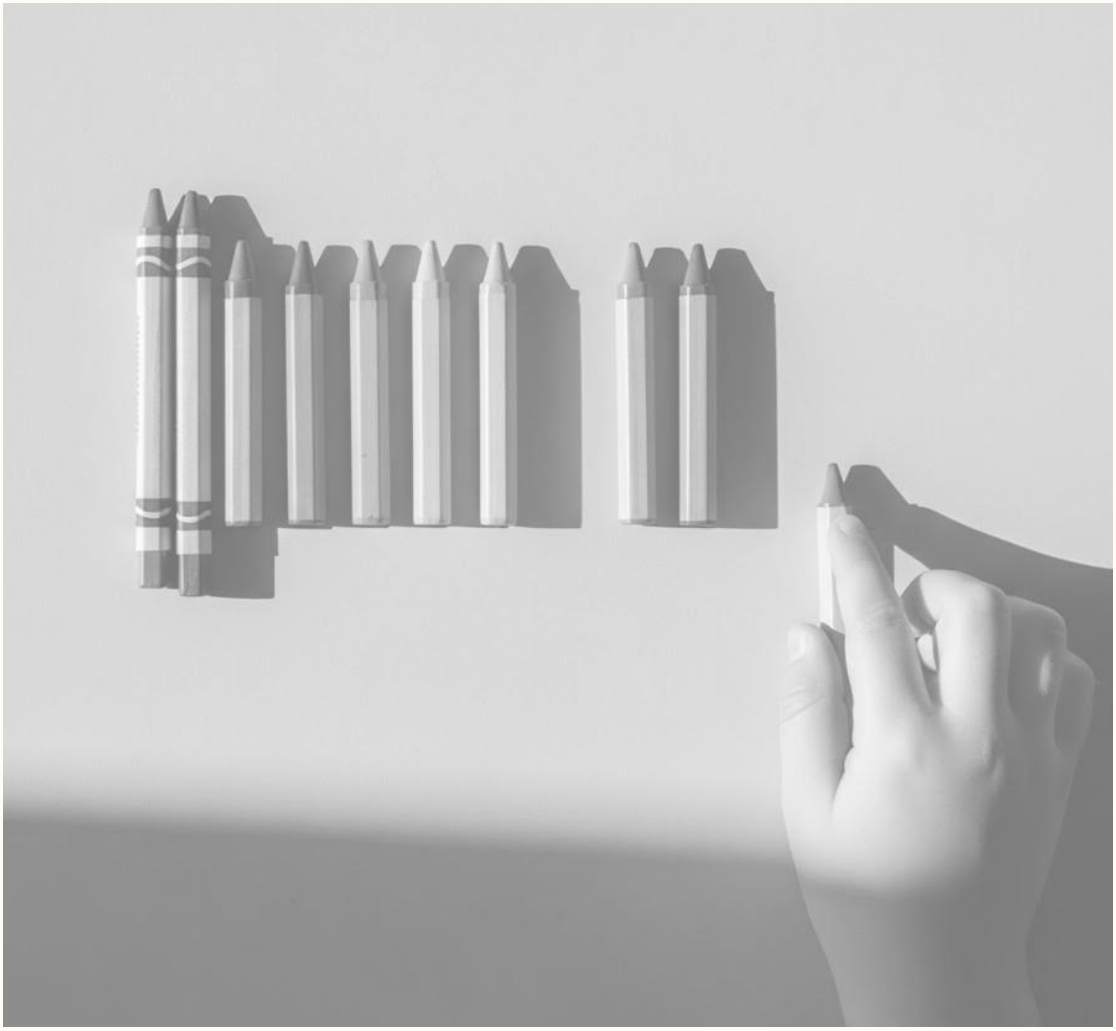




Fourthly:
Main Gaps in the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia

4 : Main Gaps in the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia

Gap analysis represents a critical step in understanding the areas of shortfall that continue to affect the state of the childhood sector in Saudi Arabia, despite the significant progress achieved across numerous national programs and initiatives. This section aims to highlight the key gaps within each report dimension through an analytical reading that identifies what has not been achieved yet, and what the childhood system requires to ensure equitable access, service quality, and sustainability of impact. This analysis contributes to guiding the future efforts toward addressing the most pressing challenges and enabling children across all regions of Saudi Arabia to fully realize their rights and opportunities, in alignment with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030.



Gaps in Physical and Mental Health

First: Nutrition, Growth, and Public Health

- Limited on-the-ground impact of current initiatives (such as infant formula support, maternal health education, and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative), despite promising results, including an increase in the rate of early initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour to 65% in 2024.
- Persistent challenges related to micronutrient deficiencies among children, particularly iron and vitamin D, despite declining rates of acute malnutrition.
- Continued prevalence of unhealthy dietary patterns among families and children, notwithstanding preventive and awareness efforts.
- Low levels of physical activity and reliance by many children on sedentary daily routines with insufficient movement.
- Limited family awareness of the importance of balanced nutrition and early stimulation for cognitive development.
- Reliance by some mothers on high-calorie, low-nutrient foods due to limited health awareness.
- Disparities in access to health services between the major cities and peripheral or remote areas.
- Lack of effective integration between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and institutions concerned with child well-being in the programs that address nutrition and health protection.
- Limited early intervention programs targeting children's cognitive and social development during the early years.
- Variation in family awareness levels regarding healthy nutrition, safe weaning practices, and children's nutritional needs.
- Insufficient field-based studies examining the social and economic factors influencing child nutrition.

Second: Early examination and Prevention

- Insufficient data, and persistent behavioral and social challenges that limit the comprehensiveness of early screening, particularly low engagement among youth and males.
- Weak continuity of awareness campaigns aimed at shifting health-related attitudes and behaviors.
- Exclusion of periodic screening from the key performance indicators of healthcare facilities, which reduces institutional incentives to expand coverage.
- Absence of a unified national database that disaggregates screening indicators by region, age group, population group, and type of disease.

- Limited integration between preventive data (early screening) and the unified health record (NPHIES).
- The need to incentivize healthcare facilities with strong preventive performance, in addition to sustained national campaigns that promote preventive behaviors as an integral component of quality of life, rather than a merely medical service.

Third: Disability and Rehabilitation Care

- The need for an integrated linkage between data of health, education, and social affairs to ensure a comprehensive assessment.
- Challenges in reaching children in remote areas, or those not formally registered.
- Limited awareness among some families of the importance of registration in the National Disability Registry.
- Absence of unified medical and educational standards for identifying, classifying, and assessing types of disabilities.
- Shortage of specialized professionals in disability assessment and integrated rehabilitation services.
- The need to strengthen the role of the non-profit sector, given the community-driven nature of such issues and the high level of demand.

Fourth: Mental Health

- Lack of disaggregated performance indicators specific to children within mental health services and programs.
- Limited coverage of training programs for detecting anxiety and maladaptive behaviors, both geographically and in terms of the number of beneficiary schools.
- Absence of a unified national system for monitoring and early diagnosis of anxiety and depression disorders among children.
- Shortage of mental health professionals in schools, alongside weak integration between school-based psychological support services and primary healthcare.
- Lack of a national database on children's mental health.
- Weak institutional integration between the Ministries of Health and Education in designing clear, school-based treatment pathways.
- Insufficient training of educational staff on early indicators of childhood depression, resulting in delayed identification and intervention.
- The need to incorporate childhood depression indicators into the National Health Survey.
- The need to introduce periodic mental health screening programs in primary and intermediate schools.
- The need to develop digital mental health content targeting children through national health platforms.

Fifth: School Health and Early School-Based Screening

- Absence of a comprehensive and regular national ecosystem for school health screening through 2024.
- Limitation of school-based screenings to seasonal initiatives (such as vaccinations or vision checks) without a unified system or standardized assessment tools for physical, mental, and behavioral screening.
- Weak integration of mental health within school-based screening programs, despite rising rates of anxiety, depression, and learning difficulties among children.
- Weak linkage between school health records and national health databases, such as NPHIES and Sehhaty.
- Implementation of some efforts related to early screening through programs such as (Wiqaya) and (Maternal and Child Health) Care, only within primary healthcare centers rather than schools, reducing early identification of children's conditions in their natural educational environment.

Sixth: Protection of Child from Violence and Abuse

- Underreporting in certain cases, driven by fear of social stigma or limited family awareness of reporting mechanisms.
- Difficulty in reaching unregistered children or those residing in remote areas.
- The need to strengthen integration among security, health, and social sectors to ensure rapid responses.
- Limited awareness among some families and communities of the seriousness of abuse and the importance of reporting.
- The need to ensure the highest standards of data confidentiality and privacy protection for children and their families.

Gaps in Education

First: Infrastructure and Capacity

- Insufficient number of public kindergartens compared to the growing demand for early childhood education services.
- The need to construct new facilities or retrofit existing buildings to meet the early childhood education standards.
- Unbalanced geographic distribution of kindergartens between major cities and peripheral and remote areas.

Second: Human Resources and Pedagogical Qualification

- Shortage of teachers qualified in early childhood education.
- Ongoing need for training and qualification programs to improve the quality of education in the early years.
- Challenges in attracting qualified professionals due to competition with the private sector.

Third: Financing and Investment in Early Childhood Education

- The high costs of establishing and operating kindergartens and early childhood education centers.
- Weak incentives offered to the private sector and potential partners to invest in early childhood education.
- The need to ensure sustainability of funding for the government initiatives of early childhood education.

Fourth: Community Awareness and Educational Culture

- Limited awareness among some families of the importance of early childhood education, with a preference for traditional home-based learning.
- Weakness of awareness campaigns that highlight the impact of kindergartens on children's cognitive, social, and behavioral development

Fifth: Educational Legislation and Policies

- The need to update the laws and regulations to facilitate licensing and operational procedures for kindergartens.
- Lack of clarity or weak enforcement of national quality standards and monitoring of compliance.

Sixth: Digital Transformation and the Use of Technology

- The need for robust digital infrastructure to support the integration of modern technologies in early childhood education.

- Limited training of teachers in utilizing technological tools and platforms in education.
- Ineffective utilization of educational technologies, despite the availability of several good models.

Seventh: Enrollment Gaps ages (15-19 years)

- Strong inclination among some youth to join the labor market early in pursuit of financial independence.
- School dropout driven by economic pressures and some families' need for additional income.
- Low motivation toward education among certain groups within this age.
- The need to develop and effectively activate diverse educational paths (academic, technical, and vocational) that align with labor market demands and students' needs.
- Limited awareness among some families of the importance of continuing the education.
- The impact of difficult family circumstances —such as divorce or the loss of a parent— on students' ability to remain in education.
- Limited availability of academic support programs for underperforming students.

Eighth: School Discipline and Student Behavior

- Social and economic factors that contribute to dropout or recurrent absenteeism.
- Weak implementation of unified policies for school discipline in some schools.
- Technical challenges in monitoring discipline electronically through unified systems.
- The limitation of the psychological and behavioral counseling programs in certain educational environments.

Ninth: Quality of Education, Curricula, and Learning Outcomes

- Weak skills of reading and deep comprehension among students, as reflected in PISA results.
- Heavy reliance by a great number of teachers on traditional teaching methods rather than adopting approaches that stimulate critical and creative thinking skills.
- Shortages of educational competencies in the subject areas with high-demand.
- Limited effective use of educational technologies despite the availability of basic infrastructure.
- Limited awareness among some parents of the importance of learning outcomes and the international assessments, considering them pointless with regard to the progression between the grades.

- Difficulty in reaching unregistered populations or those residing in remote areas.
- The need to strengthen integration and coordination among security, health, and social entities to ensure timely intervention.
- Limited awareness among some families and community members of the seriousness of abuse and the importance of reporting.
- The need to ensure the highest standards of data confidentiality and the protection of children's and families' privacy.

Tenth: Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

- Shortage of qualified personnel capable of addressing the needs of different disability groups within classrooms.
- Limited community awareness of the importance of inclusive education and its role in improving the quality of life of children with disabilities.
- Disparities in services provided between major cities and peripheral areas.
- High costs of equipping schools with assistive tools and devices.

The need to develop and adapt curricula in a manner that accommodatess the needs of special groups of students.

Eleventh: Family Participation in Education

- Limited awareness among some families of the importance of active engagement in monitoring and supporting academic achievement.
- Variations in families' digital skills, which influence their ability to effectively use digital educational tools.
- Low participation in family-oriented academic and career guidance programs.
- A gap between families' expectations and modern curricula or new educational practices.

Gaps in the Social and Cultural Context and Well-being

First: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Measurement

- Limited comprehensiveness of the monitoring and evaluation ecosystems for cultural and recreational initiatives targeting children.
- The need to develop clear quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the impact of the programs on children's participation and well-being.
- Absence of systematic tools to assess the actual effectiveness of initiatives, including measurement of behavioral or cognitive change among children.
- Limited availability of quantitative and analytical data related to the outcomes of cultural events, such as attendance records, satisfaction indicators, and levels of actual participation.

Second: Cross-sector Policy Integration

- Linkages between delivered programs and the real needs of beneficiaries remain limited to certain aspects, rather than being comprehensive.
- The need to strengthen integration among the education, culture, and recreation sectors to ensure coherence of child-focused policies.
- Weakness of a unified national framework that regulates cultural, artistic, and sports initiatives and directs them toward clear and integrated objectives.

Third: Access Opportunities and Geographic Equity

- Insufficient access to cultural and recreational activities for children in peripheral and remote areas compared to major cities.
- Limited availability of inclusively developed child-friendly facilities (safe spaces and urban environments) that encourage participation across regions.
- The need to expand the geographic coverage of cultural and recreational facilities and services to ensure access for all children across different regions.

Fourth: Cultural and Recreational Activities and Alignment with Children Needs

- Despite the large number of cultural and recreational initiatives, there remains a need for a broader methodological approach to ensure their sustainable and systematic utilization.
- Limited alignment between some cultural programs and children's actual needs across different age groups and social backgrounds

- The need to stimulate demand for cultural products targeting children, and to encourage the local creative content that reflects the national identity and values.

Fifth: The Role of the Family and Social Transformation

- The growing responsibility placed on families amid rapid social and cultural transformations, alongside inconsistencies of the family efforts to support children's cultural and sports activities.
- Challenges in achieving a clear family balance between tradition and modernity within cultural and community activities.
- The need for greater guidance in some families regarding the importance of cultural and sports environments in shaping children's personalities and developing their skills.

Sixth: Digital Behavior and Balance Across Activities

- Increased use of the internet and social media among children at the expense of cultural, sports, and social activities.
- The need for targeted interventions to promote balance between digital, physical, and cultural activities.
- Ensuring equity in access to digital devices and technological services for all children.
- The need to raise family awareness of the importance of diversifying activities and encouraging children's participation in community events.

Seventh: Policies and Regulatory Frameworks of Cultural and Entertainment Sector

- The need to develop more integrated regulations, policies, and regulatory frameworks to keep pace with the rapid growth of the culture and entertainment sectors.
- The absence of clear national frameworks to guide initiatives and events toward achieving tangible impacts on children.
- The need to ensure the sustainability, prevalence, and expansion of cultural and recreational initiatives, and to guide them toward enhancing child well-being and quality of life.

Gaps in Protection and National policies

First: Legislation on Children's Rights

- Despite the diversity of laws and regulations related to children's rights, there remains a need for a unified national framework to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate efforts among relevant entities.
- Limited availability of systematic national data measuring the impact of regulations on children's safety and well-being, despite the existence of fragmented administrative data across several sectors.
- The need to strengthen practical linkages between legal frameworks and community-based prevention programs inside the family, school, and local community, in order to maximize the preventive impact of existing legislation

Second: Access to Justice

- Limited geographic coverage of the centers responsible for implementing the provisions of custody, visitation, and access (Shaml) in some peripheral and remote regions.
- The need to enhance electronic integration among the Ministry of Justice, social protection units, and the Public Prosecution to accelerate information exchange and case processing.
- Variations in the level of awareness among some families regarding legal procedures related to children's rights, especially in situations involving family conflicts.

Third: Restorative Justice

- Limited publication of national data related to social reintegration results and the outcomes of the social observation houses.
- Inconsistent application of detention alternatives, with variations between institutional placement and community-based measures such as family supervision and community service.
- Limited availability of psychological and social support programs for juveniles after release, both in terms of geographic coverage and partnerships with civil society organizations.
- The need to unify and regulate mechanisms for continuous assessment of juveniles' progress during the rehabilitation period, to ensure service quality and follow-up with cases of recidivism.

Fourth: Digital Protection

- Limited availability of published national data on reports and cyber violations targeting children.
- Variations in levels of digital awareness among some families and schools, impacting the effectiveness of prevention and parental monitoring.
- Absence of regular national indicators to measure children's safe use of the internet over time.

- Absence of clear data on the coverage and impact of rehabilitation and psychosocial support programs after leaving foster care centers, particularly with regard to social reintegration.

Eighth: Protection from Exploitation

- Limited availability of accurate data on child labor, early marriage, and economic exploitation, alongside the absence of recent national surveys that capture the scale of these phenomena.
- The need to strengthen integration and coordination among security and social entities in monitoring and responding to cases of exploitation.

Ninth: Responsive Services

- Limited community awareness of reporting channels, including the unified hotline (1919), particularly among vulnerable groups and persons with disabilities.
- Irregular publication of data on beneficiaries of psychological and social support services.
- The need to improve coordination among different sectors to ensure rapid and high-quality responses.

Fifth: Protection from Violence and Abuse

- Lack of unified national databases across different sectors on cases of violence against children.
- Limited publication of data on the number of reports and response rates, which constrains the assessment of the effectiveness of preventive and remedial interventions.
- Persistence of certain social norms that tolerate forms of educational or domestic violence.
- Limited national surveys that measure prevailing parenting attitudes and the application of positive parenting and effective caregiving models.

Sixth: Family Protection and Care Support

- Limited geographic reach of family counseling and positive parenting programs in some peripheral and rural areas.
- The need for more systematic evaluation of the impact of financial and social support programs on child well-being and family stability.
- Lack of published statistics on the rates of utilizing family counseling centers, their effectiveness, and the most common types of cases addressed.

Seventh: Protection of Orphans and the Vulnerable Groups

- Limited availability of data on foster families and foster children, which constrains accurate assessment of family-based foster care models.

Tenth: Accountability and Oversight

- Limited representation of Saudi Arabia's data in some international indicators related to children's rights.
- The need to further empower and institutionalize the role of civil society in oversight and monitoring.
- Participation of children in accountability mechanisms and decision-making processes remains at an early stage, with uneven availability of channels that enable children's voices and perspectives to be heard on issues that affect them.

Gaps in Environment and Sustainability

- Lack of regular data on the quality of environments surrounding children in schools, neighborhoods, and public facilities.
- Geographic disparities in the quality of built environments and child-friendly facilities across regions (data indicate deficiencies in peripheral areas compared to central regions).

Fourth: Governance and Institutional Readiness

- Limited explicit and independent inclusion of children's environmental issues within national regulatory frameworks.
- The need to strengthen the institutional capacities of the entities implementing environment and sustainability projects, to ensure that children's needs are adequately considered.
- Lack of accountability and tracking mechanisms to measure the impact of environmental projects on different age groups, particularly children.

First: Environmental Education, Awareness, and Participation

- Limited prevalence of green education in early childhood, and weak integration of environmental concepts within kindergarten curricula and programs.
- The need for systematic evaluation to measure the behavioral impact of environmental campaigns on children's and families' habits.
- Weak coordination between educational and environmental entities in developing unified environmental education content targeted at children.

Second: Environment in National Policies

- Absence of precise national indicators that measure the impact of environmental policies on children's health, well-being, and quality of life.
- The need to strengthen institutional coordination among relevant sectors to ensure integration of child-focused executive programs within the environment and sustainability agenda.

Third: Quality of Children's Environment (School and Public Surroundings)

- Limited environmental monitoring systems within schools, such as monitoring of air quality, ventilation, and noise levels.

Gaps in the Contribution of Non-Profit Sector

- Limited participation of associations in the current coordination committee, alongside the absence of incentives that encourage their engagement.
- Weak reporting mechanisms and data-sharing processes between civil associations and government entities.
- Absence of official indicators to measure the effectiveness of coordination among civil associations working in the childhood sector.

Third: Field Initiatives and Operational Services

- Geographic disparities in the coverage of childhood-related services between main regions and peripheral areas.
- Absence of a national database documenting the number of children benefiting from health, education, and social services delivered through the non-profit sector.
- Insufficient information on the level of coordination between government initiatives and civil associations in implementing field programs.
- Overlapping roles among associations working in the same field, with the absence of a unified national reference framework to guide efforts and ensure integration.

First: Financial Support and Sustainability

- Absence of disaggregated data clarifying the volume of funding allocated to childhood programs and the rates of children benefiting from them.
- Weak integration among funding platforms (Tabarru, Ehsan, Awqaf) in directing resources specifically toward childhood-related causes.
- Lack of data on the maturity and scale of the investment in financial sustainability instruments (endowments and investment funds) within the childhood sector.
- Non-publication of financial data related to childhood initiatives, limiting the transparency and financial governance.
- Concentration of funding in urban areas, with a scarcity of projects targeting children in peripheral and remote regions.

Second: Institutional Coordination and Representation

- Overlapping and unclear roles between specialized associations (health, education, social) and childhood associations, leading to duplication of services and reduced impact.
- The need to strengthen the national integration framework among non-profit entities specialized in childhood-related issues.

Fourth: Community Partnership and Innovation

- Absence of disaggregated data clarifying the scale of private sector investment in childhood initiatives compared to other sectors.
- Limited availability of data on digital and social innovations targeting children within the non-profit sector.
- Absence of social innovation incubators specialized in childhood-related solutions within the non-profit ecosystem.
- Limited information on the scope of family and children's participation in the design of community initiatives.
- Lack of accurate statistics on the scale of volunteering and contributions related to the childhood sector.

Fifth: Regulation, Policies, and Legislation

- Absence of quantitative data on the number of decisions and policies related to childhood within the non-profit sector's regulatory pathway.
- Limited participation of non-profit sector institutions in the development or review of regulations and policies related to childhood.
- Weak mechanisms for measuring the impact of the recent legislation and regulations on the work quality of associations and their sustainability.
- The need to develop a dedicated governance ecosystem for the institutions operating in the childhood sector, to ensure quality of work, integration, and sustainability of impact.

Sixth: Documentation of Efforts and Impact Measurement in the Childhood Sector

- Absence of a unified national system for documenting childhood initiatives within the non-profit sector.
- Limitation of the impact measurement tools, with most associations relying on activity-based indicators that do not reflect the actual impact on children.
- Lack of detailed and up-to-date data on beneficiaries, types of services provided, and the scope of improvements resulting from programs.
- Absence of national standards for measuring the quality of initiatives and benchmarking them across non-profit organizations.
- The sector's lack of regularly published reports showing the results and impact, thereby supporting transparency and governance.



Fifthly: Report Recommendations

5 : Report Recommendations

This chapter represents the practical synthesis of the analysis presented across the report's dimensions. It presents a set of recommendations grounded in the national data and the gaps identified across the various sectors. To facilitate the direction of efforts and enhance implementation effectiveness, the recommendations are organized into specialized tables by dimension, highlighting development priorities and providing a clear pathway for the concerned entities toward improving service quality, ensuring equitable access, and strengthening the sustainability of programs. This approach aligns with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 and contributes to enhancing child well-being and the future of development.

Prior to presenting the detailed, dimension-specific recommendations, the report highlights a set of cross-dimension strategic recommendations. They are set as essential enabling requirements to strengthen the governance of the childhood ecosystem, improve policy and program integration, and ensure efficient planning and sustainable impact at the national level

Strategic Recommendations

1. Establish a unified and reliable national childhood observatory that integrates data from health, education, statistics, protection and other relevant sectors within a comprehensive national framework, produces accurate indicators and supports evidence-based decision-making.
2. Develop a binding national governance framework for childhood issues that clearly defines roles and responsibilities, strengthens institutional coordination and policy integration, and activates coordination mechanisms with executive authority to respond effectively to cross-sector needs.
3. Strengthen the integration of funding and sustainability through unified, data-driven financing approaches that target priority groups and regions, improve spending efficiency and equitable resource allocation, and maximize the national impact of childhood investments.
4. Integrate environmental considerations into childhood and urban development policies by adopting "Environment in All Policies" and child-friendly city standards within Quality of Life and urban development programs, in line with relevant international frameworks.

5) Accelerate the expansion and improve the quality of early childhood education by progressively increasing enrollment toward national 2030 targets, strengthening early learning environments and staff competencies, and ensuring equitable access across regions and population groups.

6) Develop an integrated national system for children's digital safety, including monitoring indicators in schools and families, coordinating with digital service providers, and embedding safe digital education in curricula to strengthen online child protection.

7) Develop a national strategy to strengthen children's cultural identity and Arabic language through digital content and educational and cultural activities, supported by indicators tracking engagement with Arabic and cultural belonging across age groups.

Key Report Recommendations

Physical and Mental Health

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Survival, Nutrition, and Growth	○ Implement awareness programs for families and healthcare providers on healthy nutritional practices, with a particular focus on peripheral and remote areas. ○ Integrate early healthy nutrition concepts within basic education and primary healthcare programs. ○ Develop monitoring mechanisms to ensure the implementation of guidelines and regulations issued by the Saudi Food and Drug Authority concerning infant and young children's food, to guarantee product quality and safety.
2	Preventive Health and Immunization	○ Develop a unified national epidemiological surveillance system for children, including regular monitoring of indicators related to communicable and non-communicable diseases. ○ Continue expanding the national immunization program and introducing new vaccines in line with international standards. ○ Design national campaigns to promote physical activity and preventive nutrition, targeting schools and local communities. ○ Integrate concepts of prevention and public health within educational curricula and school-based activities.
3	Mental Health and Social Support	○ Establish a national child mental health database that includes prevalence indicators and service coverage, to support evidence-based planning. ○ Design professional development programs for practitioners working with children and mental health professionals through specialized training and clearly defined career pathways. ○ Expand the scope of national programs addressing autism spectrum disorder, hyperactivity, and attention deficit disorder (ADHD) through comprehensive initiatives covering diagnosis, treatment, and family awareness. ○ Strengthen studies and data related to equitable access to mental health services for children across all regions of Saudi Arabia, ensuring more inclusive and balanced geographic coverage. ○ Introduce periodic performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of school health programs and evaluate their impact on students' health outcomes. ○ Qualify specialized personnel in child mental health and school nutrition to ensure the quality of care provided. ○ Activate electronic referral systems between schools and primary healthcare centers to follow up on physical and mental health cases.
4	School Health for Children	○ Develop mandatory safety standards in schools and public facilities that take children's needs into account. ○ Develop a national strategy to document children's injuries, including domestic and traffic accidents, and analyze their causes to support the development of preventive interventions.
	Health Protection	areas. Integrate early healthy nutrition concepts into basic education and primary healthcare.

Table (14): Key Recommendations for Enhancing Children's Physical and Mental Health in Saudi Arabia

Key Report Recommendations

Education

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Early Childhood Education	○ Accelerate interventions that enable the expansion of early childhood education coverage and sustain growth in enrollment rates, particularly in low-coverage areas, to reach targeted levels by 2030. ○ Develop supportive regulations to implement the standards and requirements of the early childhood education quality measure, issued by the Ministry of Education to improve kindergarten learning environments.
2	Enrollment in Education	○ Increase family awareness initiatives in peripheral and remote areas regarding the importance of early enrollment in education for children's cognitive and social development, and the necessity of enrolling children in early childhood education institutions.
3	School Discipline	○ Expand education-related databases to cover all core components and indicators of the educational process, ensuring balanced data availability and regular updates across all elements, to enable an integrated educational dashboard that supports evidence-based decision-making.
4	Quality of Education and Academic Achievement	○ Design more in-depth interventions to improve mathematics learning outcomes for students at the intermediate level, including teacher support, the development of interactive teaching strategies, and the enhancement of classroom learning environments. ○ Gradually introduce curricula for critical thinking and analytical skills across all educational grades.
5	Education of Priority Groups	○ Develop a supportive strategy to ensure equitable access to quality education for the underrepresented groups and in peripheral locations, taking the social conditions into account. ○ Increase targeted support to improve school discipline among priority groups, including orphans, children from low-income families and children from families receiving social assistance, while addressing geographic barriers in rural, remote and border areas and specific cultural challenges among a limited group of parents.
6	Partnership with Family and Community	○ Design effective, short-term awareness programs that reinforce recent progress in positive family engagement to improve academic achievement and students' personal development.

Table (15): Key Recommendations for Enhancing Children's Education in Saudi Arabia.

Key Report Recommendations

Social and Cultural Context and Well-being

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Strengthening the National Identity and Cultural Values	○ Develop quality standards for child-directed content that reflect the national cultural values and identity. ○ Enable Arabic language teaching programs for children through storytelling and art content. ○ Expand the "Arabic for Children" initiative in partnership between the King Salman Global Academy for the Arabic Language and the Ministries of Culture and Education. ○ Integrate the cultural identity and the Arabic language into cultural and school-based activities. ○ Develop national indicators to measure children's engagement with Arabic in Reading and via digital consumption.
2	Culture, Recreation, and Sports for Children	○ Establish child-friendly cultural centers and clubs across all regions, with a particular focus on peripheral areas. ○ Ensure balanced geographic distribution of cultural events and centers across regions. ○ Adapt cultural environments to be inclusive for children with disabilities. ○ Design mobile cultural programs (cultural convoys) that reach remote and rural areas.
3	Community Participation and Youth Development	○ Activate partnerships with civil organizations to organize cultural events and festivals for children. ○ Promote cultural volunteering programs for children within the initiatives led by the Ministry of Culture. ○ Involve children in the design and implementation of community-based cultural activities.
4	Social Services and Social Inclusion	○ Establish a national committee for children's culture under the leadership of the Ministry of Culture, with representation from relevant entities. ○ Develop a permanent coordination mechanism between cultural institutions and the non-profit sector. ○ Encourage private sector investment in children's culture projects through legislative and financial incentives. ○ Expand international partnerships (UNICEF, UNESCO, ISESCO) in the field of children's culture.

Table (16): Key Recommendations for Enhancing Social and Cultural Context and Well-being of Children in Saudi Arabia.

Key Report Recommendations

Protection and National Policies

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Child Rights–Related Legislation	○ Develop a unified national framework for coordination, monitoring, and evaluation among entities concerned with child rights, ensuring role integration, as well as harmonized monitoring and evaluation mechanismss ○ Establish an integrated national database for child protection indicators, incorporating data from all relevant sectors to support evidence-based policies and legislation. ○ Implement specialized training programs for professionals in the justice, social, and education sectors on child-related legislation and its application, in line with the principle of the best interests of the child.
2	Access to Justice	○ Expand the coverage of Shaml centers across all regions of Saudi Arabia, alongside activating the mobile center model to facilitate access in peripheral and remote areas. ○ Standardize judicial procedures and establish electronic linkage between courts, child protection units, and the Public Prosecution to ensure the timely case resolution.
3	Restorative Justice	○ Expand the application of alternatives to detention, such as community service, family supervision, and conditional release, in alignment with the restorative justice principles. ○ Strengthen partnerships with civil society organizations to provide rehabilitation and comprehensive follow-up under restorative justice approaches, both within and outside juvenile care institutions.
4	Digital Protection	○ Develop a national system to monitor children's digital safety indicators, covering schools, families, and service providers. ○ Integrate concepts of safe digital education within school curricula from early educational stages. ○ Implement awareness campaigns targeting families, schools, and educators on safe internet use and reporting digital violations.
5	Protection from Violence and Abuse	○ Establish a unified national database for cases of violence against children, linking health, education, social, and security entities. ○ Strengthen early detection programs and mandatory training for health and education professionals on identifying and responding to cases of abuse. ○ Implement awareness and media campaigns to correct misconceptions about violence and promote positive parenting practices.
6	Family Protection and Care Support	○ Expand family counseling and positive parenting programs across all regions, particularly in peripheral areas. ○ Develop a national monitoring and evaluation system to assess the impact of economic and social support programs on children and link the findings to quality-of-life indicators.
7	Protection of Orphans and the Most Vulnerable Groups	○ Establish a national database for family foster care, including indicators on children's social integration and stability. ○ Develop transitional and empowerment programs for orphans after reaching adulthood, encompassing vocational training as well as psychological and social support.
8	Protection from Exploitation	○ Conduct periodic national surveys to monitor child labor, early marriage, and other forms of exploitation. ○ Unify reporting and referral mechanisms among security, social, and justice entities to enhance rapid response and accountability. ○ Build the national staff capacities in combating child trafficking and sexual exploitation, in collaboration with international partners.
9	Responsive and Supportive Services	○ Implement national awareness campaigns that present the reporting and support services, using multiple languages and accessible formats, particularly for persons with disabilities. ○ Establish a unified electronic system to document services provided to children and measure their impact. ○ Develop coordination protocols among sectors of health, education, justice, and social protection to ensure rapid responses and improved integration.
10	Accountability and Oversight	○ Strengthen international coordination for data exchange, and ensure the inclusion of Saudi Arabia's achievements within global databases and indicators. ○ Institutionalize partnerships with civil society organizations to enable their participation in monitoring, evaluation, and periodic reporting. ○ Establish child and youth advisory councils to enhance children's participation in dialogue and decision-making on issues affecting them.

Table (17): Key Recommendations for Enhancing Child Protection Ecosystem.

Key Report Recommendations

Environment and Sustainability

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Environmental Education, Awareness, and Participation	○ Develop a strategy concerned with environmental education in early childhood that includes learning modules and practical activities in kindergartens and schools. ○ Establish indicators to measure the behavioral impact of campaigns and initiatives targeting children. ○ Strengthen partnerships among education institutions, environmental entities, and the non-profit sector to launch unified educational and volunteer programs targeting children and families.
2	Environment in National Policies	○ Incorporate child-specific environmental health and safety indicators into the performance measurement framework of Saudi Vision 2030. ○ Operationalize the principle of "Environment in All Policies" through the establishment of environmental coordination units within service ministries (education, health, housing, and transport). ○ Encourage cities to adopt "child-friendly city" standards, in collaboration with UNICEF, within Quality of Life and urban development programs.
3	Children's Environments (School Settings)	○ Develop a national guideline for sustainable school environments that defines the minimum standards for air quality, water quality, lighting, and green spaces. ○ Establish a digital system to monitor environmental indicators in schools through collaboration between the Ministries of Education and Environment. ○ Expand school tree-planting programs to cover all regions under the "Saudi Green Initiative".
4	Governance and Readiness	○ Establish a national child environment observatory responsible for collecting and analyzing environmental data related to children's health and well-being. ○ Develop a national framework for environmental governance for children that links education, health, and urban policies. ○ Integrate the environmental dimension into the periodic sustainability reports of ministries and government entities relevant to childhood. ○ Support institutional capability-building programs within ministries and agencies working in the fields of environment and childhood to enhance implementation and monitoring effectiveness.

Table (18): Key Recommendations for Enhancing Environment and Sustainability in the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia

Key Report Recommendations

Contribution of Non-Profit Sector to the Childhood Sector

#	Issues	Recommendations
1	Financial Support and Sustainability	○ Establish a national database to track the volume of funding and the number of beneficiaries of childhood programs within the non-profit sector. ○ Strengthen financial sustainability instruments (endowments and investment funds) to be partially directed toward childhood-related causes. ○ Activate a supervisory mechanism within the Coordination Committee to ensure equitable distribution of funding between urban and peripheral regions. ○ Develop a national indicator to measure the efficiency of childhood-related funding within the civil associations. ○ Incentivize donors to allocate defined proportions of their programs to childhood priorities within the endowment strategies.
2	Institutional Coordination and Representation	○ Develop a national framework to clearly define roles and responsibilities among specialized associations (educational, health, and social) to prevent overlap and duplication of efforts. ○ Engage the Coordination Committee of Saudi childhood associations to operate with appropriate authority, under the supervision of the National Center for Non-Profit Sector Development. ○ Integrate childhood-focused institutions into the system for outsourcing the operation of government centers, in order to enhance geographic access and increase the number of associations in non-primary regions. ○ Design and adopt incentives for organizations to increase levels of engagement and integration. ○ Develop a national indicator to measure the level and effectiveness of coordination among associations. ○ Organize quarterly meetings between the Coordination Committee and relevant government bodies to assess performance and identify shared work priorities.
3	Field Initiatives and Operational Services	○ Develop a national program of mobile initiatives to serve children in peripheral and remote areas. ○ Establish a unified database capturing the number of child beneficiaries by region and type of service. ○ Launch a joint initiative between the Coordination Committee and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development to cover the least-served areas. ○ Direct a portion of the government grants toward field-based projects that have measurable impact.
4	Community Partnership and Innovation	○ Adopt and operationalize the concept of open innovation at the national level to facilitate interaction between childhood-focused organizations and target groups, alongside the development of practical tools for the implementation of this concept. ○ Develop a national fellowship program to build the capabilities of professionals working in the management of childhood projects, including the academic and pedagogical competencies, as well as field-based competencies in project management. ○ Leverage the concepts and standards of social sustainability to further motivate the private sector to participate in childhood-related projects. ○ Design a national excellence standard for childhood projects and activate it through awards and competitive programs among relevant entities. ○ Apply modern concepts and methodologies to engage children and families in the design of programs and initiatives.

Table (19): Key Recommendations for Enhancing the Contribution of the Non-Profit Sector to the Childhood sector

Key Report Recommendations

Contribution of Non-Profit Sector to the Childhood sector

#	Issues	Recommendations
5	Regulation, Policies, and Legislation	○ Expand the participation of civil associations in the development of draft laws and regulations related to childhood. ○ Document and publish, on an annual basis, the number of decisions and policies issued in relation to childhood within the non-profit sector. ○ Develop a national governance guideline for childhood associations, including standards for quality and transparency. ○ Establish a periodic follow-up and consultation mechanism between the Coordination Committee and legislative bodies to submit regulatory recommendations and proposals. ○ Strengthen the linkage between legislation and indicators measuring the social impact on children.
6	Documentation of Efforts and Impact Measurement in the Childhood Sector	○ Develop a unified national system to document childhood initiatives and programs within the non-profit sector, including data on beneficiaries, outputs, and impact. ○ Establish a national toolkit for measuring the impact of child-focused programs, defining the methodologies, indicators, and standards required to assess actual outcomes for children and families. ○ Build a detailed national database that is continuously updated and records service types, quality levels and improvements achieved among beneficiaries. ○ Adopt national standards for assessing the quality of childhood initiatives and standardize the methodologies of measurement and benchmarking across associations. ○ Issue annual national reports that monitor the outcomes of the non-profit sector in the childhood sector, and clearly present levels of impact, transparency, and governance.

Table (19): Key Recommendations for Enhancing the Contribution of the Non-Profit Sector to the Childhood sector in Saudi Arabia

Conclusion

This report represents the outcome of an integrated national effort that combines research, analysis, and documentation to present a realistic and comprehensive picture of Saudi Arabia's efforts in nurturing and developing childhood over recent years. The findings reflect the scale of progress achieved across multiple domains -from education and health to protection, environment, and social well-being- embodying the Country's commitment to Saudi Vision 2030 and affirming that investment in the childhood sector is the most profound and far-reaching investment in the nation's future.

This edition also highlights the features of the qualitative transformation taking place within the national childhood ecosystem, whether through expanding service coverage, improving quality of life, advancing policies and programs, enhancing workforce capacity, or strengthening partnerships. These cumulative efforts affirm that child care and development constitute a mutual national cause, intersecting health, education, social, and legislative policies, and carried forward collaboratively by the government, the non-profit sector, and the private sector.

At the same time, the analytical review reveals gaps that continue to require further attention, particularly in the areas of disaggregated data, role integration, and equitable access across regions. While such gaps are inherent to national development pathways, they necessitate sustained collective action, effective governance, and enhanced cross-sector coordination to ensure equal opportunities for every child across all regions of Saudi Arabia.

The purpose of this edition extends beyond documenting the fulfilled achievements; it seeks to support the translation of knowledge into action by identifying future priorities, measuring progress, and strengthening national accountability. In doing so, it contributes to the achievement of Saudi Vision 2030 objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals, while safeguarding children's rights to a safe, equitable, and enabling environment for growth and development.

Children remain the compass and the ultimate purpose across all dimensions of this edition. Their well-being is the measure of quality of life, and their empowerment is the foundation for building individuals capable of contributing to their nation's renaissance. From this perspective, sustaining efforts and institutional integration, as well as unifying the national message on the childhood sector, stand as fundamental pillars for a future worthy of Saudi Arabia's children, aligned with its vision of a vibrant, prosperous, and sustainable society.



Report on the State of the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia

The team behind the preparation of the Report on the State of the Childhood Sector in Saudi Arabia extends its sincere appreciation to all institutions, experts, and specialists who contributed to the completion of this work by generously sharing their time, knowledge, and expertise, thereby enriching the report s content and strengthening its scientific and methodological foundations.